TIM'S TROUBLES

HOPE ON
HOPE EVER

OR

Tried and True

Arthur Dale
With Auntie Brown
love 1893.

AT THE MEETING.

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TIM'S TROUBLES;

OR,

TRIED AND TRUE.

A Tale.

BY

M. A. PAULL,
AUTHOR OF "THE VIVIANS OF WOODIFORD,"
ETC. ETC.

"Hope on! hope ever!

T. NELSON & SONS, LONDON, EDINBURGH, AND NEW YORK:
AND AT
The United Kingdom Band of Hope Union,
4 LUDGATE HILL, LONDON, E.C.

1893

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Preface.

THE Committee of the UNITED KINGDOM BAND OF HOPE UNION having offered prizes of One Hundred Pounds, and Fifty Pounds respectively, for the two best tales illustrative of Temperance in its relation to the young, the present tale, "Tim's Troubles," was selected from eighty-four tales as the one entitled to the second prize. The first tale, "Frank Oldfield," was written by the Rev. T. P. Wilson, Rector of Smethcote, and has been already published. Appended is the report of the adjudicators:—

We, the adjudicators appointed by the Committee of the UNITED KINGDOM BAND OF HOPE UNION, to decide upon the Prize Tales for which premiums of One Hundred Pounds, and Fifty Pounds, were offered by advertisement, hereby declare that we have selected

the tale with the motto "Nothing extenuate, or set down aught in malice," as that entitled to the First Prize of One Hundred Pounds; and the tale with the motto "Hope on, Hope ever," as that entitled to the Second Prize of Fifty Pounds.

As witness our hands,

THOMAS CASH.

T. GEO. ROOKE, B.A.

JOHN CLIFFORD, M.A., LL.B., &c.

United Kingdom Band of Hope Union Office,
No. 5 Red Lion Square, London,
August 3, 1869.

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TIM'S TROUBLES.

CHAPTER I.

TIM.

"WHIP behind, master, whip behind!" The heavy carter's whip came round, and struck the shoulders of the ragged urchin who was comfortably seated on a piece of timber, which overhung the back of the waggon. He slipped off with a quick cry of pain, and an angry flush on his young face, and dashed immediately at the boy who had brought the unwelcome stroke upon him; they both ran, darting down an entry and into narrow by-streets, the chase long and vigorously maintained with many mocking shouts and triumphant yells; but at length the pursuer caught the pursued, and holding him with no gentle grasp, poured out a torrent of abuse for his unkindness with all that fluency and eloquence that seem indigenous to the natives of the Emerald Isle.

"It's meself that looks upon ye as a mean spalpeen, Ned Brown, to be afther prayvinting me taking an airing in the way that I like, widout your nasty interfarence; and it's I that'll niver play wid you again, unless ye'll fight it out, and have done."

Ned was a thick-set hard-headed boy, who looked in size and strength more than a match for the youngster beside him, but he paused a moment before he deliberately said,—

"Vell, Tim, if it must be a fight, it must—here goes;" and rolled up his sleeves to begin.

Tim's clothing was so scanty that but little preparation was needed on his part; a crowd of boys gathered round them, applauding the respective combatants, and they set to work vigorously. The Irish boy was keen and quick-witted, and gave many an unexpected blow to his stronger opponent, smiling with a satisfied air at every advantage he gained, and groaning with mortification at his ill luck, whenever Ned's heavy hand stunned him.

A boy's fight is as disgusting, in degree, as a rencontre between professed pugilists backed by lavish young aristocrats; so we will not linger over the revolting scene, except to state that both were bleeding when they fell together, and that a shout of victory arose from the supporters of each, as they lay floundering and kicking in the London mud.

"It's meself that's intirely satisfied, Ned Brown," said Tim, rising first and attempting to straighten his ragged clothes; "and the next time you call, Whip behind! when I'm having my morning dhrive, maybe you'll remember the day."

Ned got up in a sulkier temper, and walked off without a word; Tim began to sing about "a sprig of shillelagh," and then broke into a whistle, nodded good-temperedly to the boys around, and joined some acquaintances at a game of marbles in a neighbouring court. An hour or two later he sauntered into a narrow dirty lane, leading from the New Cut, thickly populated by some of the lowest and poorest of the London poor, made his way across a narrow court, up a flight of dirty rickety stairs to a miserable room, the door of which was open, revealing a scantily clad woman standing washing a few clothes in an old bucket, while three or four children occupied themselves variously on the floor. At sight of Tim the pale baby crowed eagerly, and crawled towards him; a little girl of two or three years ran to share his attention. The boy lifted the baby in his arms, and came forward towards his mother; she turned and looked at him.

"Tim, Tim, what have ye been about the morn?—and me washing too, with all the childer to mind, and nothing in the house to put to me lips! There's a coin on the mantel, just run and fetch me a wee dhrap of the craythur, will ye? and a penny loaf for the childer. But what have ye done to yer handsome face, Tim? it's black and blue wid fighting, ye wicked, mischievous spalpeen."

Tim laughed out merrily, and the mother laughed too. "Run away, run away; I'm faint for the craythur, that's thrue."

Tim carried the baby on one arm, the bottle and money in his hand, and went forth, the little sister toddling after them. He had not to go far: up and

down that dirty lane there were two beer-houses, two gin-shops, and one public-house—a liberal supply, to say the least, for the alcoholic needs of about thirty small houses. Tim turned into a gin-shop, presented his bottle for twopennyworth of whisky, and placed the threepenny bit on the counter to pay for it. He glanced around as he stood; there were many barefooted, ragged little ones outside the counter, sent on a similar errand, paying away the money that should have bought them decent clothes, and sent them to school. When they got into the lane again, there was a boy intently reading a flaming placard in the window of the gin-shop, while a group stood around him and begged him to "read up:" this he did not at first seem inclined to do, but as Tim drew towards him, he greeted him affectionately; and when the Irish boy, who, like most of the children in that neighbourhood, was innocent of education, added his entreaties that the boy would read the hand-bill aloud, he consented, and the listeners heard as follows: "To every child who brings a jug here for drink on Saturday, the 24th of December (Christmas Eve), there will be presented a large slice of rich Christmas pudding!"

"Hurrah! hurrah!" cried the children, clapping their hands, and giving a shout of joy.

"When's that, Tim, when's that?"

"'Tis one veek next Saturday," said the boy who had read the announcement; "'cos I know father's gone for two veeks into the country to vork, and he comes back for Christmas."

Just then a gentleman came past the gin-shop. "What

are you so merry for, little people?" he asked, turning to Tim.

"Shure now, yer honour, and 'tis ye that would be merry yerself, if ye hardly knew the taste of the Christmas pudding, and were promised a big slice for nothing."

"I don't understand," said the gentleman, smiling; "who's kind enough to give away plum-pudding?"

"It's there in the vindow, sir," said the Cockney boy, pointing to the placard; and the gentleman read: there was a sad look on his kind face as he turned again to the ragged group around him. "My poor children," he began; but at that moment one of the barmen at the gin-palace came out, and with a broom in his hand made a playful rush at the "noisy little 'uns," as he called them, and bade them begone; "they knew all that they wanted to know, didn't they? master couldn't have his windows surrounded in that way," and so retreated again. The girls ran off screaming and laughing, the boys after them, and only Tim and one or two others still lingered near the spot. "Are you coming for the pudding next Saturday week, children?—do you all buy at this house?" asked the gentleman.

"We shall that day, any way," said a little old-faced girl, grinning, as if surprised at the question; "maybe there'll be something else good given somewhere else, and then we can get both," and she nodded her head sideways, as if to express with complacency the fact that "she knew a thing or two," and was accustomed to profit by the tricks of the publicans to gain her custom.

Ah! those old faces on childish forms, does it not make your heart ache to think of them—to reflect what a

difference premature acquaintance with sin and misery has made between them and the sunny, trustful, happy faces of the darlings in the nursery at home?

"I have an offer to make you," said the gentleman, after a pause, during which he seemed to have made some calculation; "if you children will come to me on Christmas Eve instead of going to the public-house, I will give you some Christmas cake, and I can assure you I never sell drink to anybody, and that you will not have to waste any money first in order to get it. Don't you see, my children, there is *no* kindness in this gin-shop offer? They get the money to buy the pudding out of the profits on the drink; they don't really *give* you anything."

"They gives us pudding," said the child with the old face.

"We should have to go for the craythur anyway, yer honour," said Tim; "the mother and fayther will send us, and they'll want a drap exthra at Christmas-tide, for the sake of the Blessed Virgin."

"Well, then," said the gentleman, "I will ask you to have tea with me and a number of other children on Christmas Eve; will that suit you all? I want to tell you about doing away with the drink altogether."

"It's my mother would have to be a sober woman, thin," said Tim, reflectively; "and fayther wouldn't get turmoiling her when the dhrink's in him. Yes, yer honour, I'll come; but I've no clothes respectable and dacent; will ye put up wid the same garments if they be clane washed, yer honour?"

"Oh yes," answered the gentleman; "as long as your hands and face are quite clean, and your clothes clean, that will do; but if they could be mended, so much the better."

After this, he pulled out six cards and read the words printed on them to the children: "'Band of Hope Tea-Meeting, Christmas Eve, Saturday, December 24th, at 5 o'clock. Hall in Candlemas Alley. Admit Bearer. Price Sixpence.'—Be sure and keep the tickets safe, and bring them with you next Saturday week. I shall see you all then. Good-bye."

"Good-bye, sir."

"The tip-top of the morning to yer honour, and many thanks," said Tim, waving his ragged cap. The gentleman turned the corner of the lane and was lost to sight.

CHAPTER II.

OUR HEROINE.

THERE was a knock at the door of one of the quiet houses in one of the quietest squares in London, and the housemaid, a good-looking country girl, was followed closely by little Geraldine Knight when she opened it.

Outside it were two children, a boy of about twelve, leading a little girl of three; they were both wan and cold, for the morning was raw and chill, and the pitiless rain descended upon their almost bare forms.

"Oh! for the mercy of the Blessed Virgin, will ye give us a penny the morn, me lady?" said the boy when the door opened; "or, if ye've no money, can ye give us a bit of bread; it's just starving that we are, and all for the want of a crumb."

Ann hesitated. "Master and mistress are both out, and I've no right to give away their things without leave," she said.

"But the pretty little lady's at home in the house, and she'll give us a bit of bread, won't she?" said the Irish

beggar, with courtesy; "blessings on ye, miss, if ye will, for ever and a day; may all the saints bless ye," he added, when he saw Geraldine whisper to Ann, and then run away. She brought some bread and cheese in one hand, and a pair of her stockings and shoes in the other, when she returned, and said, as she gazed with her sweet eyes full of tears, "The little girl's legs and feet look so cold, Ann; do let her have them."

Ann tried to keep back the smile from her lips as she answered, "My darling, she's too small to wear these; but just stop here a minute, and I'll try to hunt up some that may do amongst your very old things; but they're mostly given away already, I know."

Geraldine watched the children silently as they eagerly devoured the bread and cheese. "What makes you so poor, little boy?" she asked; "and why doesn't your mother keep the poor little baby at home?"

"Shure now, she isn't the baby, my lady; there's a baby at home for the mammy to mind, and work is scarce for the father, and I can't get a job."

"Would you work if you could, little boy?" asked the sweet child-voice, while the dark blue eyes never stirred from his face; "because, if you would, I'd ask my uncle to get you some. He helps people to get on when they are willing to work."

At this moment Ann came; she set the little beggar-girl on her knee, drew on a pair of warm socks and decent though much-worn shoes, and said, as she gave her back to her brother, "Now don't go and pawn these for drink; mind, I must see her in them when I see you again, or I give you nothing more."

"Oh, but thin, ye're raal kind," said the boy; "and may Heaven bless ye, and the saints reward ye."

And Tim, for it was he, lifted up his little sister, and slowly retreated down the steps, casting wistful glances at Geraldine as he went away.

"Would you come to work, little boy, if I got you some?" she asked again. But he did not seem to hear her, and went to another house to beg. The truth was, Tim heard her well enough; but he had two reasons for pretending not to do so: on the one hand, a genuine horror for continuous labour of any kind; on the other, he could not bear to disappoint her by saying so.

The child, after watching them some distance, turned back, and going into the parlour, began to play with her dolls, as she had been doing before the knock at the door. Her sweet musical name suited well her lovely young face, so full of innocent playfulness and gentle trustfulness. Her bright chestnut-coloured hair fell in loose wavy locks around her white shoulders; her complexion was radiantly fair, and on either cheek the bright, beautiful, crimson flush bespoke health and good spirits; her dark blue eyes were generally full of fun, and the sweet red lips parted constantly in merry smiles and laughter, revealing her small white teeth; and yet there was about this sunny little Geraldine, as perhaps there must be about all very finely strung, sensitive, sympathising temperaments, a shade of sadness. It was called forth by such sights as she had witnessed that morning, and the sense of her powerlessness to remove the weight of human woe, that rested on so many of her fellow-creatures. Even now, though she enacted various scenes with her

THE BEGGARS.

large collection of dolls, though she laid her dolls' house tables with a wedding-feast, and married a large sailor composition doll to a beautiful little waxen lady in spangled blue muslin, the hearty merriment which had been interrupted by the arrival of the beggar children was gone; not to return till, an hour later, she was lost in some wildly fanciful fairy story, when her bright eyes were sparkling with mirth, and her silvery laughter filled the old, somewhat gloomy dining-room in which she sat.

"How are you getting on, dear?" asked Ann a few minutes later, looking in; "and what would you like for dinner? Aunt said you might have anything you pleased, and cook has made you something nice; will that do?"

"Oh yes, Ann dear. Oh, I was reading such a delicious story, about some fairies and an old darling old bear; can't you stay and listen?"

"Not now, dear; you shall tell me when I put you to bed to-night; but I have to clean out your uncle's study, and I have to be very particular, you know."

"What time do they come home, Ann?"

"Just master's usual time—about six—Miss Geraldine."

So the little girl had her dinner in solitary grandeur, and after it, returned to her play; and when six o'clock came, she was at the window of the room, now lighted with gas, in her winter dress of blue merino, with her bright hair floating around her, waiting for the return of Mr. and Miss Knight. They walked together along the pavement of the square, talking intently, and together up the steps; but before they reached the door the child had opened it, and was standing ready to welcome them.

"Well, little one," said Mr. Knight, placing his hand

on her glossy head, "and has the day seemed very long without us?

"Yes, dear uncle, it is so *good* to have you back again; but I've been very happy too—Ann and cook are so kind to me. Oh, and uncle, there has been a little boy here with his little sister to beg, and I gave them something."

"Something of your own, Geraldine?" asked Miss Knight.

"Yes, aunt; an old pair of shoes and socks that Ann found; the little girl's naked feet were so blue with the cold."

"You did quite rightly, dear," said Mr. Knight, as he took his seat at the head of the table, with Geraldine close beside him. And then the child was silent, listening to the continued conversation between her uncle and aunt, and making her supper of the tempting morsels her indulgent uncle put upon her plate. But when the meal was over, and they gathered round the bright fire, and Geraldine had climbed on to Mr. Knight's knee, and laid her bright young head trustingly on his breast, and held the kind hand that clasped her to him, her sunny face grew very happy, and her voice was full of music.

"Dear uncle, when will you take me to buy my Christmas presents? You said you would go one day soon, you know."

"Will to-morrow do, Geraldine?"

"To-morrow! oh yes, uncle!" and the hands were clapped in eager glee. "Won't it be fun for us to go shopping together again? I want ever so many things; but, uncle dear, how shall I get your present for you? You will have to shut your eyes while I buy it, and mind

you don't look out at the corners;" and Geraldine laughed at the thought. "But then you will hear me talk about it. O uncle, *would* you mind going *out* of the shop just while I buy it, *would* you?"

"I think I *might* perhaps be good enough to do such a kind thing as that," he replied in the same tone, "if you will promise not to be more than an hour making your choice."

"O uncle, of course I shouldn't be; I can only afford to give you one thing, you know."

"How rich are you, Geraldine?"

"Ever so rich. I have half-a-sovereign you gave me, and auntie gave me my prize in money, a whole sovereign—was it not good of her?—because she said I had really been industrious this half; and you know, uncle, I can read any print and almost any words now, and write you a little letter if you *did* have to go away."

"Thirty shillings! why, that's quite a fortune, Geraldine. Are you going to spend it all?"

"Oh, but I have more, uncle; I have nearly five shillings in my box, saved up of little pennies and things I have had."

"What *things*, Geraldine; monkeys and parrots?"

"O uncle, you know; farthings, and fourpenny bits, and odd pieces, and now and then a sixpence. I mean to leave that unopened, and to spend only my thirty shillings; don't you think that is *prudent*, uncle?" and Geraldine smiled merrily into his face.

"Very prudent indeed; and what is this money to buy?"

"O uncle, *lots* of presents: something for each of the little Christies, and a present" (and here she whispered

in his ear) "for auntie, and also" (speaking aloud again) "one for you, and one for cook, and Ann, and Martha."

"And where do you want to go for all these things?"

"I think the Burlington Arcade, uncle; there are so many pretty things there; but we shall see to-morrow. You know, I should like to look in at the shop windows as we pass; might we not, uncle?"

"Yes, Geraldine."

Mr. Knight was half asleep; his little prattler had lulled him into the land of forgetfulness. Miss Knight rose and left the room. Geraldine laid her head back again, and thought of the fairy tale she had read, and then of the little beggar boy and girl, and wondered whether they were out in the cold still. The idea made her shiver. And then she began to think, as she often had done of late, what her dead papa and mamma were like, and to speculate upon their relationship to Uncle and Aunt Knight; and while she was still thinking on this subject, Mr. Knight awoke and looked at her. The fair, smooth brow of the child wore a somewhat troubled expression, the merry eyes were intent and fixed, and a grave sweetness lingered round the usually smiling mouth.

"What is it, Geraldine?"

"O uncle, I did not think you were awake. I was wondering about papa and mamma."

"What about them, dear child?"

"Why, *when* they died, and everything; and which was your sister—oh, how silly of me!—I mean, was papa or mamma your relation?"

Mr. Knight was silent. He gazed into the fire; with

his disengaged hand he raised the poker to stir it, and still he did not speak.

"May I not know, uncle? Don't you want to tell me? Weren't papa and mamma good? Do say."

"Yes, Geraldine, you shall know all. Let me see—are you ten next birth-day?"

"Yes, uncle."

"Ten! Well, then, listen to my story. Seven years ago this winter, I was one day coming from the Docks on a cold, bleak afternoon; the snow was falling, and a piercing wind drove it full in my face. In one of the low streets I saw a crowd of children gathered around a very small child, raggedly dressed, with a sweet but pale little face, and bare-footed."

"Oh, uncle, just like that poor little girl to-day. But what has the story to do with my papa and mamma?"

"Don't interrupt, dear Geraldine. I paused at this crowd, asked the children who she was, and they said they didn't know; they thought she came out of a public-house near; but she couldn't tell where she lived. I went at once to the public-house, asked if any one there had missed a child; they all said No, except one woman, who was too drunk to speak, and the others said *she* had not brought any child with her. I came back to the little girl. She was crying now, with the cold, and moved her little arms towards me. I hope I did rightly, Geraldine; I lifted her from the ground, hailed a cab, and brought her home."

"O uncle, where is she?"

"Don't interrupt, darling. She was very weak and ill for many weeks, but Cornelia and I nursed her care-

fully; and Ann, who had just come to us then, helped; and by-and-by she looked very bright and well, and talked very fast in her baby way; and once she laughed, and called herself '*Deraldine!*'"

Mr. Knight looked at the fair child in his arms as he uttered these words. She grew very pale, her lips quivered, and, hiding her face, she burst into a passion ate fit of tears. After a while, raising her head, she exclaimed,—

"Then, uncle, dear uncle, I don't belong to you at all; and any time I may have to go away;" and she sobbed violently.

"Hush, hush, my child," said Uncle Knight in his gentlest tone; "you have been mine for seven years; sometimes I hope you will be given to me for all my life. I made every effort to find your parents, Geraldine; and when I could not obtain any clue to them from the police, nor by advertising, I determined to adopt you as my little niece. Cornelia consented to it, and has been your true and kind friend, though she may not have done so much to spoil you as I have;" and Mr. Knight stroked the soft cheek of the child with a loving touch.

Geraldine's eyes were still full of tears. "Then I was a beggar, Uncle Knight; a little wandering street beggar; and I thought I was *always* a little lady." Her cheeks grew crimson.

"Is not that pride, Geraldine?" asked Mr. Knight, looking kindly at her. "Do you suppose that little beggars in the streets have not feelings, and loving hearts, and bright souls to be saved? My little girl—my dearest

child—God has taken you from the trials of poverty for some wise purpose; perhaps that you may learn how better to help the poor—that you may be His missionary—doing them all the good you can as you grow older and wiser. Thank Him for His mercy towards you. See in every poor child your brother, your sister, and remember constantly *who* it is that makes you to differ from another in outward circumstances."

At this moment Miss Knight re-entered the room.

"I have been telling our Geraldine her history, Cornelia," said Mr. Knight. "But, my child, I have not yet told you how dear, how precious you have become to us—how, if ever it should please God to bring you to your parents, we trust they will still spare you to us to be our comfort, our joy, our delight. My little Geraldine, if you had been my own child, I could scarcely have loved you better."

But at these loving words the full heart of the child could only express itself again in tears. And when bed-time came, and she heard her guardian's good-night blessing whispered over her, she flung her arms around his neck, begging, beseeching him "to let no one, not even father or mother, take her away from *him*."

"How did she bear it, Tom?" asked Miss Knight, when the door had closed on Geraldine and the kind Ann, who had been her nurse, and still acted as her attendant.

"Poor little darling, she was much overcome," replied Mr. Knight; "but I think she is old enough to know; and I am glad it is over. She will make a fine woman, Cornelia. But oh, her clinging, passionate love, poor

little lamb, it may bring her sorrow;" and Mr. Knight sank into a deep reverie.

And in those quiet moments the romance of the merchant's life took possession of his soul, and a vision of dazzling beauty passed before him. A head, with its rich, black braided hair, and soft, splendid dark eyes, and a dark, warm, crimson tint on the exquisitely moulded cheeks and proudly smiling lips, was lying on his bosom, where little Geraldine had nestled. He was far away from England, amidst olive and orange groves, with a burning sun above, and the ruins of Moorish palaces and minarets standing out in the distance against the bright blue sky; and he heard her whisper, in the fine accents of the grand old Spanish tongue, soft words of love, and trust, and passionate devotion to her English lover. A brother, grasping and hard, in whose charge Dulcinea had been left by her dying father, insisted that the young girl should marry a rich don, for whom she felt no regard, instead of the young foreign merchant; and, when she would not be persuaded, they shut her up in a tower-like building, under lock and key, and put some strict duennas to watch her every action; till the girl, mad with the agony of disappointed love, rashly swallowed a poisonous plant that grew on the ruined tower.

Months and years of regret for that fair memory, for that wildly loving woman's heart, had only made Mr. Knight cherish her more fondly, pity her more tenderly, and feel that no other woman would ever fill the place of his idolized, his unfortunate Spanish bride, sweet, generous Dulcinea.

In Geraldine's warm, loving temperament, he traced a resemblance to the character of the beautiful Southerner; and it drew him to the child with an increasing sympathy, mingled, as was natural, with a half-pitying dread of her unknown, unseen future.

CHAPTER III.

A TALK ON THE WATER.

"WANT a boat, sir?"

"No, thank you, my boy; it is too cold for the water to-day."

"Perhaps it is, sir, for land folk; but I go out any weather with father; so I takes less notice, I suppose."

"How long have you taken to the water?"

"O sir," said the boy; and he looked up with a pleasant smile on his weather-beaten young face, and tossed his dark hair back from his forehead—"I don't remember the time when I first got into father's boat; it seems to me I might have been cradled in it, for all I know. The first thing I can think upon is having the great waves all round me, and the little white fish dancing about in them."

"Oh, your father is a fisherman, is he?"

"Yes, sir; he fishes, as well as keeps this here boat; 'cause, don't you see, sir, this weather, when nobody goes out hardly, we shouldn't all of us be able to live on

boating; for we're a brave, big family—nine of us, besides father and mother; and there's only two of us away at sea; they're mostly little 'uns."

"And how old are you?"

"Fourteen, sir."

"And a fine boy of your age, too," said the stranger, smiling.

At that moment—as it sometimes happens in winter—the sun shining out suddenly from behind a cloud, lit up the inky sea with wonderfully beautiful effect, changing, as if by magic, and in a moment, the whole aspect of the scene. The bay was crowded with small and large sailing vessels, waiting for a favourable wind, and the sunbeams caught the white and brown sails, and the mast-heads, and lit all up with their own glorious, golden beauty.

"It is enough to tempt one out, if this sunshine will only last," said the stranger.

"We shall have gleams like this," rejoined the boy, looking up at the white masses of cloud and the dark sky between; "but it will not be sunny all the time, sir."

"I will go with you for an hour, my boy," the gentleman said; and he descended the steep rocks, and leaped into the little pleasure-boat, which was soon gaily bounding over the sunlit waves.

"You are something of a reader, are you?" he went on, as he took up from one of the boat cushions a well-thumbed copy of "Robinson Crusoe."

"Yes," said the boy, with his intelligent smile, "I'm dearly fond of reading; I've read all we've got at home, but that isn't much. This is a Sunday-school book, sir.

We've got some nice books in the library, sir; but I want to know and read more. I wish father could have spared me to go to school longer."

"You have a fine book before you, my boy," said the gentleman, glancing around at the fair inland picture, and away at the rolling grandeur of the mighty sea; "a book that, were I you, I should never tire of reading."

"I mean to spend my life reading in that book, sir," said the boy; "I'm going to be a sailor; I love the sea like I love myself, father says; you should see how we sport ourselves in it in the summer, sir. But I don't want to be always a sea-lubber; I mean to be a captain some day."

"Heigho!" laughed the gentleman good-temperedly; "you *are* ambitious; captain what of—a ferry-boat?"

"I know it sounds rather grand, sir, for me to say it; but I intend to be captain of a good-sized ship. Only, then, you see, sir, I must *learn;* but still, when a boy is sober and industrious, I don't see why he shouldn't rise."

"Nor do I," answered the gentleman, a good deal interested in his young waterman; "but what is your idea of sobriety—getting drunk only when you are on shore, eh?"

"You are joking, sir. I am a Band of Hope boy. I goes to all the meetings that I can, and I try to understand the subject, sir. Father's been a teetotaller ever since before I was born, else, he says, he wouldn't own two boats with such a family as ours; do you think he could, sir?"

"Certainly not; if he spent the money at the public-house, it would be gone for ever. But you don't mean

to say that you think there's any harm in just a little drink, a glass of cider say—that's what you Devonshire people are so fond of, isn't it?"

"Yes, sir," and the boy smiled; "there's a lot of money spent on cider in these parts; and it only makes the men quarrelsome and poor."

"Well, I'm not a teetotaller," said the stranger, "but I daresay you are right in that; at all events, you will do very well without drink yourself, because you have never known the want of it. I think your father is a very praiseworthy man. And now, what is your name?"

"Coleridge—Fred Coleridge, sir."

"Coleridge! Is that a common name in these parts?"

"Not very uncommon, sir. There are others besides us."

"I expect you may be related in some way to a poet who wrote a strange piece about the sea. It was called the 'Ancient Mariner.'"

"Is it in a book, sir, and by a Mr. *Coleridge?*" The boy smiled brightly. "Did he write a book full of it?"

"No; it is only a long piece of poetry. But he wrote some other good things too, enough to make a book of altogether."

"Thank you, sir. Did he live long ago?"

"Not very. I was alive when he died."

"Did you know him, sir?"

"No, Fred. He had a clever son, who might have been perhaps as great as his father, if it had not been for the drink, but it spoiled him; he could not control himself, poor fellow."

The boy looked very thoughtful. "What a pity, sir,

to be son to a great poet, and to fall through drink; it seems as if nobody was safe who took it."

"You have been very frank in telling me *your* history," said the gentleman; "don't you care to know anything about me?"

"I thought it was not my business, sir," and Fred rested on his oars, rolled the blue web of his jacket further up his arms, and paused for the gentleman to speak.

"My name is Christie. I am a London ship-owner and merchant, in partnership with a gentleman called Knight, and I am come down here to meet the captain of one of our vessels, called the *Linda*, from the West Indies. I want to see him immediately he puts into port. If you or your father should chance to hear of such a vessel coming in, when I am not likely to know it, at night or any time, and you will come to me, or fetch off the captain to me at once, I will gladly pay you very handsomely."

"Thank you for the job, sir; we will keep a look-out."

They had by this time reached the land. Mr. Christie stepped out of the boat, wrote his address on a card, and as he gave it and paid the boy, said, "You won't forget the *Linda*, Fred Coleridge?"

"Oh no, sir; but I fear it will be a stormy night for her and every other vessel;" and the boy glanced anxiously round the horizon. "There's an ugly squall coming on from the sou'-west, unless I'm mistaken."

"I hope you will be. There is one blessing, this is a very safe harbour, if she can only reach it. Good day."

"Good morning, sir, and thank you."

CHAPTER IV.

A BAND OF HOPE TEA-MEETING, AND ITS CONSEQUENCES.

IF you could only have seen how much those children ate, you would hardly have believed your own eyesight. The long tables in the Hall in Candlemas Alley were bountifully supplied with cake and bread and butter on the night of Saturday the 24th of December, but not at all too bountifully for the crowd of half-starved children that thronged there. And until they had eaten a long while, almost in silence, they seemed to have no eyes even for the holly and other evergreens which loving friends had hung around the room, that these poor little wandering ones, living amongst the bricks and stones of the great city, might for once feast their eyes on the beauties which God has planted in His fair world. But after the keen edge of hunger had been satisfied, there were whispered but energetic comments on the green boughs and the flags, and satisfied reflections on the smartness of their tea-room. Looking around that crowd of little ones as he entered, Mr. Waterhouse quickly recognized his little

friend, Tim Maloney, whose appearance was pleasantly metamorphosed by a remarkably clean skin and decently combed hair; and who now looked, besides being the gay, joyous little lad he had been before, a bright-faced, fair-complexioned, red-haired, blue-eyed boy. Directly he spied the gentleman, to whose goodness he owed one of the best meals he had eaten for many a long day, Tim arose in his seat, waved his shabby cap, and shouted energetically, "And shure, it's I that am dalighted to see yer honour beyond and above the whole of the company."

There was a general laugh; and Mr. Waterhouse came smilingly up, shook Tim's hand, and bade him sit down again, or he might lose the remainder of his tea.

"But oh, yer honour," continued Tim, "what a pretty place ye've put us in, with traes, and the blooming ivergraens around us. It's meself is thinking it must be like the Emerald Isle itself; and I wish I was back in ould Ireland, saving yer presence, yer honour, just to see for meself."

"I should like you to stay and hear what we have to speak to you about, before you take your departure for your native land," said Mr. Waterhouse, laughing, and Tim laughed too. "Have you had plenty to eat?"

"Such a plenty, yer honour, that it's meself that's forgotten to be hungry at all at all; and I've taken the liberty to save just a taste for the little sister at home;" and Tim Maloney exhibited the corner of a piece of cake that had been very innocently abstracted for the little girl that toddled after him nearly all day long. Mr. Waterhouse thought it best to take no notice of this in

Tim, though it was against the rules. It is difficult and sometimes dangerous to make an innocent action take in any degree the character of a crime.

And, now, even cake and sweet tea had lost their charms, and after singing grace in a certainly novel style, the children were dismissed for a few minutes till the room could be arranged for the Band of Hope meeting. This Candlemas Alley Band of Hope had not been long established; it was composed principally of very hungry, dirty, ignorant, destitute children, for whose condition two or three kind friends had felt sincere pity, which had stimulated them to determined efforts on their behalf. At a given signal, the little ones crowd in again; here and there may be seen a father or mother who has accepted the invitation to be present, which the children took them, and who enter half shyly amongst the pretty decorations in that warm, brightly-lighted room; on the platform two or three gentlemen are already seated, and presently a young man stands up to sing; the cheerful words of a Temperance melody, set to a very popular air, come floating through the room, the children stamp their feet as an accompaniment, and join very heartily in the chorus, though with some little difficulty about the words; at the close there is a very determined burst of applause—cheers from the elder boys, stamping and clapping from all. The chairman, after letting them have their own way for a little, checks them, and they are soon obedient; they are reminded by Mr. Waterhouse that it is their own meeting, and they must behave like juvenile men and women; then comes another song, and another somewhat vociferous chorus, and then Mr.

Waterhouse gets up to speak. We know there are many who retain the false idea that Temperance speakers are accustomed to set teetotalism in the place of the gospel; we wish all such would attend our meetings and judge for themselves; and surely any that listened in Candlemas Alley the night when Tim first attended a Band of Hope meeting, must have thought very differently. It was very nice to watch Mr. Waterhouse's kind face as it beamed with love for the little ones he addressed, how tenderly he spoke to them of the Son of God, who had come down, more than eighteen hundred years ago, from all the brightness of heaven to this earth, to save the children who would come to Him, and leave off wicked ways, and love to do His will; how plainly he explained to them that the drink drives little ones away from Christ, that the public-house is a snare which the devil has put in their path to make them *his* servants instead of God's; how earnestly he begged them never to take the drink, never to sip it from the jugs when they were sent to fetch it, never to go if they could help it, never to have anything to do with it as they grew older; he described the promise he wanted them to make that night, and let them all feel that the love of his heart was flowing out to every child that night in that room, making them feel that henceforth, however sad and destitute they had been before, they had at least *one* friend on earth, and beyond all, the Friend above, who "sticketh closer than a brother." Then followed another song, accompanied by the concertina, which met with unbounded approval; then another gentleman, called Noble, rose to address the meeting; he was a man who answered

rightly to his name; tall, well-proportioned, with a florid complexion, and brown hair curling around his high forehead; his smile was especially sweet, and his whole aspect good and true; he won the hearts of the children at once; he made you recall that passage in the Bible, "In heaven their angels do always behold the face of my Father which is in heaven," for he seemed to be speaking not only to the children present, but also to those unseen guardian angels who watch over them, and who stand in God's presence continually—so pure, so tender, so loving were his words; he spoke a great deal of what children could do, the power they had for good or evil—and this was a new light to most present—he suggested to them how much three hundred prayers might do, coming up from their hearts to God; how much good three hundred kind actions done every day, one each by all of them, would accomplish; and how their three hundred names on the Temperance pledge-book would aid on the great work, and make the world happier and better; but he did not forget to make them laugh, and seeing there were many Irish children present, he told them funny stories of their own good priest Father Matthew, till peals of laughter echoed round the hall, in which you may be sure Tim joined with all his heart. After Mr. Noble finished there was a Temperance hymn sung, and a short prayer offered by Mr. Waterhouse, and the meeting was over; all except the signing. Tim was amongst the children who made their mark, and had their pledge-cards to carry home. Before he went, he sought out his kind friend, Mr. Waterhouse.

"Ah! shure, yer honour, an' Tim Maloney shall niver

forgit this night and yer charity," he said, as he took off his cap to that gentleman.

"Keep your pledge, Tim, whatever you do; remember you have *promised*, and God will know if you break it, though I may not see you."

"Ah, by the powers, yer honour, not all the little devils on airth should make me break it now 'tis signed," said Tim, positively.

"Take care, Tim, don't boast; and come again next week to the meeting."

"It's meself that wouldn't like to be absent, yer honour," said the boy, lifting his eyebrows in a deprecatory manner; "it'll be *the* evening of the week, but ye don't give tay and cake every time, do ye?"

"Oh no, no," said Mr. Waterhouse; "no, Tim, you must come to hear speaking and singing; we only give tea four times a-year."

"And ye're right good and kind to do that, I'm thinking, yer honour, to such a lot of us."

"Good night, Tim, bring your clean face every week with you, and be sure and remember to come."

"Niver fear, yer honour, I'll not forget."

And Tim went home full of delight and interest in the new scheme he had adopted for getting rid of strong drink; and when he reached his miserable home, it was to hear the children crying, and find the door locked. He went to the landlady—"Mrs. Thomson, have ye got my mother's kay?"

"Yes, here 'tis, Tim; do stop that baby's crying."

"Mother's gone out on her frolics maybe?" said the boy questioningly.

"Yes, shame to her, to leave her children as she does, it's no wonder her man drinks, when he's no place fit to sit down in."

"I'll not hear ye abuse the mother," said Tim angrily, going out and banging the door; the woman followed him, opened it, and shouted up-stairs some coarse words of anger, but the boy had reached his own home, and turning the key, went in. The four younger children were alone in it, the fire was out, and the room dark, save for a lamp in the dirty lane outside, that somewhat dispelled the gloom. They all began to cry out for something to eat, when their brother entered; all, save the baby, who stuffed his thumb in his mouth, and with tears upon his grimy little face, was sobbing himself to sleep. Tim borrowed a match from a neighbour on the same floor, and struck a light. What a desolate room it was! how different to the evergreens and flags in the pleasant hall he had left; he had brought home a small bough, and this he stuck up over the mantelshelf, "for Christmasin," as he said to the eldest child, who made many inquiries as to its use; then he drew out the cake he had intended for little Nelly, and divided it into four, giving one piece to each of the three hungry little ones, and feeding the baby with the rest, who, at sight of food, took out his thumb and cried again. They were all ranged about the floor; there was but one chair in the room, and that was inconveniently high for short legs; and the only beds were heaps of straw; a table stood in the middle of the room, and a few articles of crockery on a shelf; there was neither dresser nor wardrobe—such things are seldom required in the home where both husband and wife

indulge in strong drink. Tim saw it plainly to-night; he had had his eyes opened, and new ideas implanted in his mind; he saw how that, "but for the dhrink," they might have clothes and food and a pleasant home, such as he had a distant recollection of, on the other side of the Channel, when they kept a "grunter" and a kitchen-garden, and had "praties" enough and to spare. He wished those days would come back again; he had made up his mind he never would drink himself, and then if he could get work, perhaps he might save up money, and get things "nate and tidy about him." Poor boy, he had no love for work, and the thought was not pleasant to him; he determined to dismiss it at once;—some got fortunes by begging, why not he? Thus he speculated, till, tired out, he fell asleep with the rest of the children on their straw bed. The father and mother left them alone for two or three days; Tim took Nelly and went out to beg; he was ashamed to go again to the square where the pretty little lady had given his sister the socks and shoes, for fear of being recognized, for they were already gone for "the craythur," and the mother had swallowed the price of her child's comfort. Timothy Maloney, the father, kept all his wages to himself save the smallest sum with which he could appease his wife's wrath, and might have been heard every evening between Christmas and New Year, keeping up the fun and revelry in that haunt of Irishmen, "The Erin-go-bragh." He was a pleasant, light-hearted, good-natured Irishman, without a thought for the morrow, so long as he had enough to keep the pint going; and as he was an honest fellow, and acted as a first-rate "draw" to his compa-

triots, the considerate landlord of the "Erin" was compassionate enough not to turn him into the street at night, but to let him sleep somewhere in the vicinity of his coal-cellar, while he turned in himself these cold winter nights to a goodly feather bed, bought, perchance, with Timothy's own money, which had for many years been faithfully dropped into the very same till. Timothy was a useful fellow too, for the house of Michael O'Flaherty was the suspected rendezvous of dangerous characters, the very lowest grade of Irishmen, men who would plot away life, or talk treason in their cups, with something more than a vague intention of carrying it out in daily life; so that it was convenient to have Timothy there, to cause a hearty laugh by some well-timed joke, and to keep up a general appearance of mirth and jollity. Timothy's worst qualities were drunkenness and dirtiness; he was a man, though not without parts himself, quite content to follow his leader in an easy care-for-nothing way, whatever and whoever that leader might be. Just now, it was a man who rivalled himself in dirtiness and drunkenness, but who possessed a giant intellect—enough brains, rightly directed, to have made him one of the most useful men of his time and country; but these brains and this mighty intellect were so perverted and sodden by intemperance, that all things looked distorted and wrong to him. He liked to harangue his fellows, to plan the reformation of the Government, to say vile things of Queen and Parliament, to lead the masses of unshaven, unwashed, uneducated men, who called him "Champion of ould Ireland," "Deliverer of the darlint Emerald Isle," and the "Friend and suc-

cessor of O'Connell of blessed memory;" and as he stood on one of the greens that are crowded on Sundays by the many listeners to those who desire celebrity, or who earnestly seek the good of their fellow-men, his dishevelled hair, his mad harangues, his racy though coarse language, his well-pointed though vile epithets, stimulated his hearers to that sort of frenzy that can only end in drunken revelry, or in a disturbance of the peace; this man's rendezvous was the "Erin-go-bragh," where he spent all his money, leaving the reform he professed to sigh for, unaccomplished in his own wretched home, where his miserable little children pined and cried for food, neglected day after day, week after week, by their guilty father. With such a leader, such a master in politics, it was no wonder that Timothy Maloney had no money nor inclination to take care of the home and the wife and children so dear to him in innocent days, years ago: indeed, besides the drink that beggared him, which he himself consumed, he was also expected to provide it for the throat of that eloquent redresser of the wrongs of the Irish nation, that majestic denouncer of Queen, Lords, and Commons, who gulled his fellow-countrymen week after week with grand, but altogether imaginary efforts, made on their behalf, and retarded instead of advancing the righteous progress of his nation. This false patriotism, this miscalled philanthropy, this ill-directed reform, was only one of the deadly fruits that grow so abundantly on the poison-tree of the drinking system.

Two days before the new year dawned, the mother of little Tim returned. Her whole appearance suffered

from her debauch. Her dirty garments, her emaciated form, her pale, dissipated face, her bleared eyes, must all have been hideous to a sober on-looker; and poor Tim, much as he loved his mother, often as he defended her in the rows that too frequently occurred between her and his father, turned from her now with horror in his heart. He felt that all that the speakers at the meeting had said was true: the "dhrink" *does* alter the appearance of man, and woman, and child—"draps of the craythur" can't be indulged in without producing ill effects on face, and heart, and life.

That afternoon Tim went out to play with the rest of the children; all save the baby, who was left in the mother's keeping. The other boys and girls in the court soon gathered round him.

"Arrah, now thin, boys, I'll be afther houlding a timperance meeting," he exclaimed, suddenly, as a new thought dawned in his mind; "and we'll summon the neighbourhood intirely; and it's I, Tim Maloney, that is to be the spaker. Only, mind ye, I'm not Timothy Maloney at all at all, but a blessed praist that lived in Ould Ireland, and they called him 'Faythe Matthew.' And he preached aginst the craythur, and made the men and women and little childer sign the timperance pledge, and wear gould medals of one patthern. And he had some music and a dhrum, and they played him their tunes—faith, and he loiked it. And now thin, can't ye get a dhrum and a fife?—and we'll have one of the raal good sort of meetings."

Were ever Irish children at a loss for playthings? An old kettle, that had been thrown into the yard as utterly

unfit for use, to wait for the advent of a collector of broken pots and kettles, was hoisted as the "dhrum," and beaten vigorously with two bones; doubled-up fists and penny whistles furnished four or five other musicians: and Tim, who had by this time borrowed an aged, rusty, black train of a good-natured woman, for a frau's gown, tied it round his waist with a piece of rope, and marched forward at their head as "that blessed praist, Father Matthew," receiving the courtesies of the girls and the salutes of the boys with much dignity and grace. Anything was welcome to relieve the monotony of that court and lane: and a considerable number of women and children gathered around Tim, as he stood on a stone placed on the top of a dust-heap and commenced his oration. The trumpeters and "big dhrum" ceased, and Tim's clear, boyish voice resounded through the court:—

"Me frinds, it's about the good cause of temperance that I'm come to addhress ye. If ye don't dhrink, why, ye know well, ye can't get dhrunk; and would ye take the advice of your praist, and never put a dhrop more of the craythur inside your swate lips at all at all? Why then, if ye should, there'd be plenty in the house instead of famine, and the little childer wouldn't go starving the blessed day long, and there'd be no batting and cursing and swearing wid ye all the long night. Och, dhrat, me frinds, it's I that am for being a temperance man; and I'll show ye what I've done, and how I've made a big promise never to dhrink agin, even the laste dhrop ye can mishure."

And Tim, who had used much action through all his energetic speech, here raised his hands aloft, holding the

card triumphantly, and — alas for our hero! — the stone slipped forward, and he fell ignominiously into the dust heap behind him. There was a general shout of merriment. The big drum and fifes rallied around their discomfited leader, and sounded "quick march." Tim got up, laughing as heartily as anybody, and recovered his composure enough to exclaim, with a perfection of accent, "Och, thin, would ye disperse widout your praist's blessing?" while he spread his hands benevolently over the crowd of children around.

So ended the first temperance speech of our young Band of Hope boy.

CHAPTER V.

GERALDINE'S CHRISTMAS PARTY.

ON the same night that Tim regaled himself with sweet tea and cake in Candlemas Alley, Geraldine held her annual Christmas party. The old dining-room in Woburn Square had been entirely changed in its appearance for the occasion. In the centre of the room, its root fixed in a gigantic flower-pot, was the Christmas-tree—that pretty German annual which has so well borne transplanting into English soil, and been so continued and increasing a favourite with the young folks. Geraldine had to climb a chair to reach its boughs; and it took her and uncle Knight a whole day to arrange the numerous gifts, which loaded it so heavily that some of its branches were in danger of breaking. On the table beside it were spread books, portfolios, desks, and other heavy articles that it had been found impossible to hang upon the tree. The room was tastefully decorated with branches of glossy holly, with its shining red berries, and the lovely little waxen fruit of the mistletoe boughs.

Amongst the evergreens were placed small golden and silver and crimson globes, that reflected every article in the room, and sparkled beautifully in the blaze of firelight. The grate was laden with the Yule-log, that crackled in noisy, old-fashioned Christmas style—much to the pleasure of Mr. Knight's ears, who loved all that reminded him of country life and customs. The gas chandelier was one mass of greenery, out of which the light glanced softly upon fair young faces and forms that filled the room with joy and mirth.

Geraldine, the young hostess of the evening, performed her part gracefully and simply. She had entirely recovered her spirits since the evening when her real history had been made known to her by Mr. Knight; and now her laugh was the gayest, her smile the readiest, and her steps the lightest of all the merry group. She wore a white frock, spotted with silver stars, and tied at the fair shoulders and around the graceful waist with broad blue and white ribbon. Her bright hair floated around her, surmounted by a wreath of fair white jessamine and blue forget-me-nots, the sprays of which twined coquettishly with its glossy waves.

And now the noisy games played in the breakfast-room and hall were over, and they had all assembled round the Christmas-tree. The gas was turned down very low, the wax-tapers on the branches were lit, and only their soft gleams and the fitful firelight revealed the eager little faces that surrounded it. Their elder friends watched *them* more than the coloured lights; all save Miss Knight, who, being appointed umpire to decide in case of any dispute as to the first light extinguished,

kept her eyes fixed steadily on the tree. How the colour came and went!—how smiles dimpled the fair cheeks!—how compressed and firm grew the boys' lips! What a study of character there was in those twenty young faces, with their varied, marvellously varied, expressions, and yet all so alike in the number and position of the features that mark the "human face divine!" Geraldine's eyes and lips were actually dancing, so quickly did the child's expression change—now hopeful concerning the fate of her favourite taper, now doubtful, now puzzled, now amused; and Mr. Knight's eye rested on her, after a momentary glance at the other children, and fastened itself on the sweet countenance with the loving, fond gaze of a tender father; till the general shout of triumph was heard that announced the extinction of the light.

"Hip, hurrah! three cheers for the old Christmas-tree!" shouted one boy, eagerly, while the others joined in chorus; and the girls waved their small cambric pocket-handkerchiefs, scented and edged with deep lace, in more ceremonious and less noisy fashion.

"Oh, let's wait till *all* the lights are out before we begin! Shall we, sir?" asked one bright boy, looking at Mr. Knight.

"As you will, Tom. I am satisfied any way, so long as you are pleased."

"It is *so* pretty," said a little girl, "it would be a pity to undo it all till the tapers are out!"

This seemed to be the general opinion. So the children continued to watch till the last little candle burned down into its socket, and with a faint, flickering gleam went out.

"Now then!"—and Mr. Knight turned up the gas. The room was again ablaze with light, and the presents were eagerly claimed as they were handed down from the tree.

"Minnie Christie!"

"Here I am, sir."

"Thomas Knight Christie!"

"That's me."

"Is it, indeed, Master Tom? I hope next Christmas some one will be kind enough to give you a grammar.—Where's Ally Warder?"

"Poor Ally! she couldn't come, her cold is so bad. May I take it for her?" asked Ally's sister, a tall, awkward, but good-natured girl, one of the eldest in the group.

"Of course, Catherine." And Ally's present was handed down.

"For Ann Smith! Who's Ann Smith?"

"Why, auntie, don't you know? Ann—my Ann—is called Smith. Mayn't she come in for it, and the other servants too?"

"Yes, she may."

"Uncle, will you please ring the bell?"

"What for, Geraldine?"

"Here's something for Ann Smith."

The servants came in, smiling and laughing, to receive their presents, with many pleased expressions. Ann opened her box, and discovered a pretty silver brooch; cook had a purse, and Martha a pair of gloves. These were Geraldine's purchases: there were others of more value from their master and mistress.

How the children chattered and laughed over their abundant possessions! How the little girls almost screamed in their eager joy! And the boys reiterated the assertion that the whole affair was "jolly," and just like Mr. Knight, who was a "regular brick"—forms of expression which seem at present to denote the epitome of all that is pleasant and to the entire satisfaction of the juvenile "lords of creation."

In the midst of the general confusion the supper-bell sounded, and none of the little guests seemed unwilling to adjourn to the large parlour, where a rich feast was spread. Conspicuous amongst the viands were the handsome decanters, with their sparkling wines; while ruby claret-glasses and crystal wine-glasses were beside each plate.

"I don't take wine now, Geraldine," whispered Minnie Christie to her friend, before they left the dining-room. "I wish papa had been here to explain about it to Mr. Knight. Papa is not a teetotaller, as I am, you know, Geraldine; but he quite likes me to be, if I wish."

"Where is it your papa is gone?" asked Geraldine. "I am so sorry he couldn't be at my party to-night."

"He is somewhere on the south coast—Plymouth, I think it is—watching and waiting for the *Linda*. I wish it had happened a week before or a week after Christmas. We shan't have him to go to church with us to-morrow; it will seem *so* strange. Mamma is saving up her strength to try and go out in the morning, if it is fine; and I hope she will be able to. Fancy Tom, and me, and little Carry going alone!"

"It *would* be lonely, dear," said little Geraldine.

sympathizingly. "If we went to church, we might all have gone together; but as we don't, it can't be helped, can it?"

"No," said Minnie, philosophically. "But would you tell Mr. Knight about my not taking wine?"

"Don't you take *any* wine, Minnie? I thought teetotallers took home-made wines; and there are gooseberry and elder on the table, besides the port, and sherry, and claret."

"The *real* teetotallers don't," said Minnie, resolutely.

"Are there sham ones, then?" said Geraldine, laughing. "Because the other day we had a lady here, and she said she was an 'abstainer,' I think it was; and yet she said there could be no spirit in elder wine, and then had a glass when aunt asked her."

"That isn't what I mean by abstaining," said Minnie. "I have taken the pledge against *everything* that can intoxicate—all sorts of wines and spirits. And papa said it was nonsense to be a sort of half-teetotaller; he liked thoroughness in everything."

"So do I," said Geraldine. "What made you be one?"

"I can't stay to tell you now. Look, they're all going in! There's Mr. Knight; will you tell him, Geraldine?"

"Uncle!" said the child, running to him, and taking his hand.

"What is it, my darling?"

"Minnie doesn't take wine now; so please don't ask her to."

"What do you mean? Minnie isn't a teetotaller, is

she? Such a sensible little girl as she is need never fear to become a drunkard. You don't dislike wine, do you, Minnie?"

"Not much, sir; but I'm a teetotaller."

"Then I will do as you wish, my child; every one has a right to their own opinion. I can't talk more now; see, I must lead the way. Miss Minnie Christie, allow me to take you into supper?"

With a graceful bow Mr. Knight took the child's little hand in his, and led her in, placing her at his right side. Miss Knight followed with the eldest boy present, and seated herself at the bottom of the table, her young squire at her right hand. The other children followed hand-in-hand; Geraldine being led by her uncle's namesake, Tom Knight Christie, and the few elders of the party brought up the rear. Presently they were all seated; the master of the household pronounced a blessing; and then supper began. For some minutes the party were very quiet; too much engaged with the delicacies before them to have much time for conversation. Then the bright wines were poured out, and small hands raised the pretty glasses to their lips with every appearance of long use and abundant practice.

"Miss Minnie," said the young gentleman next below her, "you take no wine: allow me to drink with you?"—and he lifted the decanter nearest him. "Do you like port, or prefer elder? That is a *very* simple wine, you know—quite a lady's wine; although *some* ladies I know don't think it *strong* enough for them;"—and he winked mischievously.

"I take none at all, thank you, Sam," replied Minnie,

courteously, but colouring a little. "Can you get me a glass of water; I should like that."

"Mr. Knight," said Sam, "do you know this young lady won't take wine?"

"Then let her have water," said the host, smiling kindly at Minnie; "so long as she is well served with what she likes best, I am happy."

Ann, who was waiting, quickly brought a small glass jug of water, and placed it beside Minnie Christie. An old gentleman at the end of the table, near Miss Knight, had overheard the conversation, and put in a remark, so that Minnie at length found herself the object of much unwelcome attention, while Geraldine's sweet eyes anxiously watched her, hoping that nothing would be said to trouble her friend, whom she had done her best to shield from every annoyance. "So, little girl," said old Mr. Maunder, peering at her through his gold spectacles, "you presume to judge what you shall and what you shall not eat, do you?"

"*Drink*, sir," replied Minnie quickly.

"A mere quibble—my dear, it comes to the same thing. Do you suppose that you know better than the Almighty what you ought to swallow; don't you know that the Bible says, 'Wine rejoiceth man's heart?' But you teetotallers are gloomy folks, you don't want to laugh and be happy."

Minnie blushed scarlet and looked puzzled. "I am but a young teetotaller, sir," she began; "I only signed the pledge a short time ago, and I have not yet read, as I mean to do, what would enable me to give you proper answers to these questions; but I feel sure, sir, that

whatever helps to make man better, and prevents his becoming wicked, *can't* be displeasing to God; and this I know teetotalism does."

She glanced appealingly at Mr. Knight, and went on with her supper.

"That's the teetotal cant," continued Mr. Maunder, "and I can't abide it; and if you puzzle them, they're never ready with an answer—they're always 'young in the cause,' or something. I should like to hear that little girl say what *reason* there is in giving up the use of what God has given us." The old gentleman raised his glass of port to his lips, and drank it with apparent relish.

"I am not a teetotaller," said Mr. Knight good-temperedly, "but I go so far with my young friend as this: that if she believes the disuse of any article of diet can aid, in any way, the reformation of her fellow-creatures from misery and vice, she is perfectly entitled to make such an attempt, and to expect God's blessing on it; we know, we all know, young as many of us are, shielded as we are from the sorrows brought on by drink, that there *does* exist, in this otherwise happy land, a wretched class of beings, slaves of the vice of intemperance, who, if they would but drink moderately, might be ornaments of society: some of our city missionaries tell me, these men seem as if they *could* not control their appetites, if they once taste strong drink. Minnie Christie, my little friend here, desires to help and encourage these poor outcasts by her example; it is a laudable desire. Am I not right, Minnie—this is your wish?"

"Yes, sir; and also that I may never fall myself," said

Minnie, modestly; "other people better than I have fallen—is it not best to avoid what can hurt me?"

The old gentleman was about to reply, when the loud voices of two of the boys interrupted him.

"We must fight it out, I tell you."

"You forget where we are, Harry; in Mr. Knight's parlour."

"I don't care where I am; if you had any pluck, you'd scorn to make that excuse."

"I tell you, you are half drunk, Harry."

"You dare to say that again."

"I do dare."

"Hush!" said Mr. Knight, in a loud and commanding voice. "Harry Maunder, keep down your fists, sir, and remember you are sitting by a little lady."

"Can't you behave like a gentleman, Harry?" cried the argumentative old gentleman at the bottom of the table, in a tone of irritation and annoyance; "a pretty mess you make of it whenever you get near a wine bottle; leave the room, sir, at once."

"You've drunk more wine than I have, guv'nor," said the angry lad, "so you needn't complain; and I'm *not* going to leave the table, I tell you."

There was a frightful look of anger on the old man's face, but he restrained further expression of it: the boys subsided into greater quietness, and Mr. Knight tried to rally the whole company; but it was in vain, and after a disagreeable half-hour, the otherwise pleasant evening was brought to a welcome close, by the arrival of the carriages, loving embraces between the little girls, eager visits to the dining-room for packages of presents, and then

"good-byes," and rolling wheels. Into the last carriage stepped Mr. Maunder; his son Harry sulkily bade adieu to the ladies and Mr. Knight, and followed him, and they drove off.

"Uncle dear," said Geraldine, "what a *beautiful* evening we should have had, if it hadn't been for the Maunders. Don't you think we should have a happier evening next time without the wine?—it was *that* made all the trouble."

"Has Minnie been converting you, Geraldine?"

"Oh no, uncle; but don't you think it was so?"

"I have no wish your next party should be so disturbed: we will see, my Geraldine—good-night." He held her in his arms, kissed her repeatedly, and as she left him, blessed her in a tender, almost faltering voice.

CHAPTER VI.

THE WRECK OF THE GOOD SHIP "LINDA."

FRED COLERIDGE was right. The sou'-wester blew into a gale, on that Christmas Eve, tossing the boats and ships that were moored in the bay, up and down with frightful vehemence, and bringing destruction to many of the vessels that were beaten before the wind, and sought to gain shelter and safety in the excellent harbour of Plymouth. The darkness of night settled down upon the sea in the midst of the storm, while the boy and his father kept a look-out upon the rocks to watch for the *Linda*, or any other vessel that might be in peril on their shores; inside the breakwater they might venture to sea in their own boat, even on this wild night, if their aid were required; outside, it would be a terrible risk. As they stood there watching, they heard a gun, the signal of distress, and through the gloom the flash of the rocket darted up into the sky, like an embodied shriek of terror and despair.

"I wonder if that can be her, father!" said Fred. "I

think we'll go to her, but I shouldn't like to alarm Mr. Christie for nothing."

"You won't do that, Fred Coleridge," said a voice behind him.

"O sir, are you there? I'm very glad you've come; there's a ship in trouble beyond the breakwater, near the reef of rocks out by the Mew stone, and father and I were just thinking of going out to her."

"I wish you would; if it is not the *Linda*, it is some ship that wants help, that is very clear. Will you take me with you?—I can pull an oar!"

"Sir," said the elder Coleridge, "it is not a night for *amateurs*, as they call it. I had better pick out two or three old hands to help, and then be off."

Another gun sounded over the water, and echoed and re-echoed from the surrounding hills. Mr. Christie thought of his ailing wife and the children at home, and considered that, with his imperfect knowledge of boating, he should retard rather than forward the progress of the boat, so he relinquished the thought of going, and determined to stay there till their return. Off at length went the little craft; Coleridge and his companions rowed, Fred steered. What a sea it was! how broken the waves were, how they dashed and foamed around and over her; how slow, how very slow was their progress against that howling wind and beating storm. Wrapped in his Inverness cape, Mr. Christie sat down on a ledge of rock, and watched them through his opera-glass. Again there came over the sea that note of trouble, the boom of the gun; wilder and louder grew the storm, the wind roared over the waves, lashing them into a very fury of white and

boiling foam; only one or two stars appeared in the black sky above, and every now and then these were obscured by the wind-clouds that swept across them, but the light in the breakwater lighthouse gleamed brightly, one faint ray of hope across the gloom.

Would the little boat never reach the fated vessel? Fred steered beautifully; but his hands and arms were aching with their task. One of the men changed places with him, and he took an oar. On again through the surging breakers. They are outside the breakwater now, and with terrible force the giant billows bear down upon them; one engulfs them in the trough of the sea, till another lifts them up again on its angry bosom, whirls them along for an instant, and then casts them down into the darkness and abyss. But now, with a sudden, sharp turn of the rudder, they are up again, and close alongside the distressed ship. Fred reads the name by the ship's lantern. It is indeed the *Linda;* he tells the news to his father; they step up the ladder and on the deck. What is the matter? The ship has struck; she is sinking; the water is pouring into her. How many on board? Sixteen, all told; the captain and his wife and child, the mate, eleven sailors, and the cabin-boy. Sixteen and four—twenty. The boat will be too heavy for such a night as this; they must make two journeys with her. Who shall stay behind? There is no time to be lost: gently the captain's wife and little boy are lowered into the boat; she is calm and quiet, though she begs to be allowed to stay with her husband, and when he remonstrates for the sake of their child, embraces him silently, but passionately, as they part.

"He will be saved too, I hope and believe, ma'am," said Fred, as he helped her into the boat; "there's time for a second turn."

"God bless you, my boy, for those words of hope," she answered; then clasping her baby to her bosom, sat very still and silently.

Fred was on deck. "You take my place," he said to the cabin-boy, "and I'll wait here till the boat comes again."

The oars were in the water before all had noticed the exchange; then Coleridge turned a white face upwards.

"My boy, my boy, you've done a noble deed; but what should we do without you! Think of your mother at home."

The young face quivered; but his words were brave.

"Only make haste back to us, father. There's hope for all; and I can swim, you know. Captain," he continued, turning round as the boat left the ship, "Mr. Christie is in Plymouth waiting to see you. I think he is anxious about you. Are you much behind time?"

"Yes," replied the skipper, sadly; "we have had rough weather all the passage, as the log will show; and this is to be a worse finish than I expected. There's no help for us unless that boat, or some other, comes to us again quickly. Is it your father's boat? What made you give up your place?"

"I know every inch of the shore. I have a better chance than your boy had, if it comes to a swim for dear life," said Fred.

"You're a plucky young fellow. Come down into my

cabin, and we'll have a glass together; 'twill keep the cold out." He beckoned to the other sailors to follow, and began to retreat.

"No, thank you, captain," said Fred. "I never drink."

"Oh, that's all blarney," said the captain, contemptuously; "teetotallers can always take a glass for medicine in an extremity like this."

"Not *my* sort of teetotallers," replied Fred, smiling good-humouredly. "I'm one always; fair and foul, sick or well; if you stick to it, it's worth anything."

"And for how long?"

"All my life, captain."

"Oh, then, of course, you don't need it. I'm used to it, and couldn't manage without it. Don't your father take it neither?"

"No, captain; and he *was* used to it."

"Did he get drunk? What made him give it up?"

"Why, he saw it was doing him harm, and keeping him poor, though he only had a spree now and then.—Captain, what was that?"

The ship had given a bound, and a shiver passed through her timbers, and through the ten human beings that stood on her deck, arresting the words that were on Fred's lips, and making them all still and silent in their dread nearness to death. She was fast sinking; the water gurgled and oozed in noisy restlessness in the cabins below. Unless assistance come very soon, they must go down with her. Another minute of agonizing suspense; the sailors dropped on their knees.

"It is better to die praying than drinking, captain," said Fred.

The captain nodded silently, and followed their example, as he whispered to the boy, "You pray for us, if you know how."

Thoughts of his mother were crowding on the boy's heart—of the happy hours in the Sunday school with his kind teacher. He strained his eyes for the welcome outline of his father's little boat; but no deliverance was at hand. He knelt amongst the others, and poured forth some simple, heartfelt words to the God who stilled the howling tempest on the Galilean lake, and whose word to-day is as mighty as then on the rolling sea and the bounding tide; and who, above the noisy roaring of wind and wave, often in mercy whispers, "Peace, be still," and there is a "great calm."

While the boy prayed, and the impetuous sailors wept like children, they still heard the gurgling of the water below; and now it swept over the deck, and wetted them as they knelt. They stood up at once, clasped each others' hands, and waited for that next bounding billow which would come rolling to them, ere long, from the ocean beyond. All was dark and awful; nothing of life and hope, and sweet humanity, save the clasp of those hands of flesh and blood, and the dim, dim outline of the little group on the sea-washed deck. How the storm still raged! Was prayer in vain? or was the divine message of peace to be to the souls and not to the bodies of those shipwrecked sailors? Would the boat *never* come?

Another low grating, gurgling sound, and the breaker

they had waited for swept over the deck and parted her beams. The sailors threw themselves apart, and clinging to the spars, muttered "God bless you" to each other as they separated, and drifted, drifted out to sea. . . . .

"Is that my boy Fred?"

There was no answer. The boatmen dragged a piece of timber and the human form lashed to it alongside, and lifted the corpse into the boat. It was that of a young man, dressed in sailor fashion—taller, older than Fred Coleridge; and the father sighed heavily, overcome with disappointment; it would have been a consolation even to have recovered the dear body.

"There are two of them perched on that there piece of rock," said one man, who held an eye-glass as he gazed into the distance. "Row to them, boys; let's see who 'tis out there; maybe one's Fred."

The young dead sailor lay at the bottom of the boat, and with this awful freight the men rowed out to sea. Above the water-mark, on a ledge of rock, they could now distinguish two figures seated. They shouted as they drew near. A faint but clear voice was heard over the noise of the storm, and it answered, "Father, father!"

Oh, what a strength was in the father's arm as he heard those words, tired as he was by long and wearisome exertion through the terrible hours of that night. He pulled vigorously, and soon the boat reached the rocks, having to navigate very carefully in the dim light amongst the sharp and dangerous ledges, lest the boat should be upset, or by some sudden blow be rendered leaky and useless. The two left their perch, and

scrambled down. Not until they were safely in the boat, and safely out into clear water, was a word spoken. Then Fred Coleridge clasped his father's arm, laid his tired young head on his father's shoulder, and saying, "Thank God, we are saved," burst into tears. Coleridge, a grave, quiet man, usually undemonstrative, now strangely stirred and moved, drew the boy to his breast, pulled back the wet hair from his face, and planted a kiss on the open brow, and whispered such words of joy and gratitude for his preservation as made the boy's heart bound with surprise and pleasure, and linked the father and son together for evermore. How much better we are for knowing the love of each other's hearts! How many go on, year after year, yearning for sympathy and expressions of affection from those they reverence and love, and still unsatisfied—till some great trial of faith, some terrible test of love, some awful impending danger, causes them to be told how dear they are, how cherished they are, and gives to them a life-long happiness as the sweet fruit of a few hours' misery or pain.

The boat lingered over the scene of the wreck, trying, but in vain, to find the other men. The captain, who was rescued with Fred Coleridge from the rock, offered a large reward for the recovery of the bodies; and a day or two later, four corpses were picked up on the sands of a small cove in the neighbourhood, while the remaining sailor was recovered by a passing steamer far out at sea—exhausted, but still *alive*—and brought in safety to Plymouth.

Who shall picture the thankful happiness of the captain's wife, when she had him restored to her and to

her child? or the gratitude of Fred's mother, who had been on the rocks, under the Hoe, waiting for the first return of the boat, and been filled with agony at her boy's absence, and anxiety on his account? Mr. Christie, too, was there to grasp the boy's hand, and commend him for his act of generous self-denial; and a knot of boys—his companions in many an hour of sport and fun, amongst whom he was a sort of leader—had gathered to receive him with a hearty boyish cheer, which rung out into the stormy dawn with a glad sound of life and love.

Next day the divers were busy over the wreck of the *Linda*, and recovered a great deal of her cargo; and as the vessel was also insured to a large amount, the loss to Messrs. Knight and Christie was not so heavy as it was at first feared. The sailors were dispatched to their homes; but not before they had received very generous treatment from the kind-hearted merchants, who compensated them in full for the loss of their clothes and other effects; and treated them, as they were accustomed to treat all the men in their service, with open-handed liberality.

"And now, Fred Coleridge, what can I do for you? How can I best show my gratitude for the prompt aid you have rendered me, and the risk you have run?"

"Sir, you have already thanked me too much, and given father and me, and the men who went with us, more than we should have dreamed of receiving for one night's work."

Mr. Christie smiled. He had taken—naturally, perhaps—a great fancy to this young lad, with his open, generous

heart and his pleasant face; he saw in him the germs of a fine man, should his disposition, his tastes, and his education be well cultivated.

"Have you had enough of the sea, Fred? or do you still cling to the old intention of being a sailor by profession by-and-by?"

"Oh yes, Mr. Christie, I think I'm a born sailor."

They were walking up and down the path inside the sea-wall at Plymouth, stopping every now and then to gaze over it at the tranquil waters of the bay, which, since the storm, had been unusually quiet, and sometimes almost glassy in their still beauty.

"Then, if you are a born sailor, Fred, I think I can propose something to you which will meet with your approval: stay here another year, and go to school—a night-school will do, as your father can scarcely spare you by day; learn all you can of navigation—no expense need be spared—the bills will be sent to me; I shall only complain if you don't learn all I want you to. Then come to London: I will apprentice you to myself and Mr. Knight; and you shall go on board a new ship, which we must build before then, to take the place of the *Linda*, if not her name: and Geraldine shall christen her too, that's certain," added Mr. Christie, in an aside. "Does this meet your views, my boy? Stick to your teetotalism—it's a good thing for you; and there's no reason that I know of, if you are steady, why you should not rise to what you told me of—to be captain yourself some day."

What a glow of pleasure lighted up Fred's intelligent face with a beautiful radiance as he turned it to Mr.

Christie! There was enough to gratify that kind-hearted gentleman without the eagerly-spoken words that accompanied it. "O sir, I shall never, never thank you as I ought; but you shall see that I try to deserve your kindness."

CHAPTER VII.

PROGRESS.

EARLY in the new year, and at the third Band of Hope meeting in Candlemas Alley, Mr. Waterhouse distributed some books to the children present, expressing the hope that they would take them home and read them.

"Faith, yer honour, and it's kind of ye to say so; and it's meself that would like to do ye the pleasure, but for the one thing, that I *can't* read niver a word at all; and it's me belafe that hardly a one here present could do any better, though we're all good at admiring the picthurs."

It was Tim Maloney that spoke, as usual, for the rest; and they clapped his speech vociferously.

"There must be a school of some sort set on foot here," said Mr. Waterhouse aloud.

"Och hone, and ye're right, yer honour. Let the schule be set on *foot*, and the learning 'll be in the *head*."

The boys laughed, and Mr. Waterhouse joined them.

"If you learn as quickly as you talk, Tim Maloney,

you'll be a clever boy after a while; and you can help to teach the little ones."

"Ah, now yer honour's laughing at me," said Tim, who was sitting with his little sister Nelly on his knees, having brought her to the meeting to give her, as he said, "a sight of the gas-lights and the big room." "It's I that'll require taching for many a long day, and be stupid and unlarnt at the end; but I'd like to rade, yer honour. There's many a pretty story, with a picthur to it, to be seen in the shop windows; and it's Tim Maloney that's the boy to enjoy that same for nothing."

There was another laugh. Mr. Waterhouse consulted in energetic whispers with some young men who had accompanied him—the owner of the concertina was one of these—then he rose on the platform, and made the following announcement:—"My dear children, if you will come to be taught, some kind friends are ready to teach you. This room will be open for a school every evening, excepting the Band of Hope meeting night, and Saturday night, from seven till nine; and we shall be glad to see as many as like to come: only remember, if you come to school, that learning and playing are two different things; and that you will never read the stories in the shop windows that Tim likes so much, unless you are attentive, quiet, and industrious. The school will be opened to-morrow evening. Now, children, let us sing."

Next evening there was a crowd in Candlemas Alley. The children poured into the room; the teachers had hard work to make themselves heard above the clamour of young and noisy tongues, and went away feeling some-

what discouraged, and that nothing had been done. But Tim at least had learned something; he had grasped and made his own, by name and form, half-a-dozen letters, and over these the boy puzzled and worked through his leisure all the next day, discovering them in many unlooked-for places, and turning the streets of the great metropolis into a giant Alphabet Book, out of whose pages A B C D E F constantly stared at him till they had become familiar friends.

Many of the children relaxed their attendance at the school; the Band of Hope meeting was more popular amongst the juvenile inhabitants of Candlemas Alley and its neighbourhood; but Tim Maloney kept on. Every night the red head of the Irish boy was to be seen in the hall, and his blue eyes were fixed intently on his reading lesson, and his musical, merry voice uttered with triumph the words he had learned, and spelled, in clear ringing tones, the letters of the rest. He became, as was but natural, a favourite with his teacher, the owner of the concertina. This young man was a clerk in a merchant's office, and generously devoted part of his spare time to the entertainment and instruction of some out of the thousands of little street Arabs, who had long ago, on his first arrival from his country home, excited his pitying interest. The Ragged and Sunday School teachers, and Band of Hope leaders, are really as necessary and quite as useful to the State, as the magistrates, policemen, and jailers of our land; the more the former increase in number, the less occupation will there be for the latter. It is a constant sum of inverse proportion that is being worked out on the tablets of the nineteenth

century. Which is the most Christian method of government, the *prevention* of evil, or its *punishment* when committed? The months passed by; Tim had mastered the art of reading. He was now ambitious to begin to write, and his teacher encouraged him. The first "pothook" copy on the slate was a wonder of art; no one laughed at it more heartily and good-temperedly than Tim.

"Och sure, yer honour, but the poor things are cramped intirely, and haven't the room nor the power to stand upright. Wid your lave, yer honour, I'll rub it all out, and do it over agin."

The stiff fingers, that had seldom before handled anything smaller than a baby or a shillelagh, curled themselves tightly round the slate-pencil, and set to work again. Tim was encouraged; the lines were straighter; in time he should make letters, and then write them. He saw before him a means to make money in that direction, and in an easy, genteel manner, that suited well the Irish boy's notions, for he dreaded hard work. He knew plenty of young girls who paid away their pence for the writing of their love-letters, and mothers who had boys at sea or in prison, who would all be glad to employ him. Tim had now been at school the greatest part of a year, and for that time his progress had been wonderfully rapid. His hatred to the drink had also increased; and his eyes were open now to read aright the scenes that took place around him through its use.

"Is it not time, Tim," said his teacher one day, "that you did something for your living? A great boy like you, nearly thirteen, ought to be ashamed to be at home

idle, and still more ashamed to go out to beg, when you might as well work."

Tim coloured, till his general aspect was very fiery, then laughed—his usual way out of a difficulty.

"Ah, yer honour, it's nurse that I am to all the babies; and if ye had them to mind, and the mother to look afther when she's had her dhrap, ye'd no say that I was an idle spalpeen."

"You would do them all more good, and yourself too, Tim, by leaving them every day, and earning an honest penny for yourself. You can't get clothes and books, nor save a trifle, while you are hanging on at home in this fashion. You had better tell your mother you are going to look for work. Promise to give her so much a week, and then put away the rest for clothes. I will, if you like, show you how to put it in the Post-office Savings' Bank, and keep your book for you with the money entered, and then there will be some chance of your becoming a respectable man, as you want to be; don't you, Tim?"

"Yes, yer honour," said Tim, and then he was unusually silent. The prospect opened up before him was a strangely bright one; with that gay imagination which is one of the characteristics of Irish nationality, he immediately pictured for himself a very brilliant future, which little Nelly was to share, and which would cast a golden reflex on the father and mother, now so sunken in degradation and drunkenness.

"I'll work, yer honour, when I can get any," he said, after some minutes, "and be thankful if ye'll help me to a job."

"We will see about it, Tim, now that I know you are willing."

A fortnight later, Mr. Philp, Tim's teacher, said to him, "Are you still in the mind for work, Tim?"

"Yes, yer honour;" and the Irish boy threw back his mass of glossy red hair from his white forehead, and smiled and stared wonderingly to know what fortune awaited him.

"There's an errand-boy wanted at our place, Tim, to take messages to the Docks, and sweep out the offices, and go with letters and all those kinds of things. Do you think you could manage that?"

"It's not much acquaintance I've had wid the broom beyond the stick, I'm thinking; but I'll thry, yer honour, if I may come."

"Well, Mr. Knight asked me to-day if I knew any boy that would do, and I told him I thought I did. He gives three shillings a-week to begin with, Tim; and if you are honest, and clean, and intelligent, he will give you more in a month."

"Three shillings every week! 'twill soon be a fortin, yer honour; and if I give the mother two and keeps one for meself, we'll all be better off for that same. And many thanks to yer honour for the naming to the gintleman a ragged spalpeen like Tim Maloney, och hone!" and Tim spun round on his heels like a top, and then settled down again to his "copy."

"Look as neat as you can, Tim, when you come to-morrow," said Mr. Philp, when school was over, and he bade him good night. "Give your jacket a rub, and—stay, is this the only cap you have, it's hardly respectable;

Tim, come along with me;" and the kind-hearted young man led the boy to a second-hand clothes shop in the neighbourhood, chose a decent cap from a boxful beside the door, paid the price, and gave it to him; and with another injunction to be sure to come clean, and with his hair as tidy as he could, he walked away, followed by a shower of warm-hearted blessings and thanks from his young scholar.

Next morning, just as he took his seat at his desk in the counting-house of Messrs. Knight and Christie, there was a knock at the door, and on Mr. Philp's calling out "Walk in," Tim Maloney made his appearance. He looked smart and intelligent under his new cap; and the bright glance of his merry eyes and his roguish dimples when he smiled, made his young face very pleasant to look upon.

"Good morning, yer honour," said he, a little abashed but not shy at his new circumstances; "is the gintleman come?"

"No, not yet. Sit down on that stool, Tim; he'll be here soon. What will little Nelly do without you all day long?"

Tim's bright face clouded a little. "She cried sorely when I left her, yer honour, the little darlint; but I tould her to be afther taking her slape now, and waking up when I get home agin."

"That's a very good plan, Tim. I hope she will do so."

At this moment there was a noise of feet and voices outside, then the door opened, and in walked Geraldine, followed by Mr. Knight. She made a pretty picture of

life and youth and beauty in that dull city room. She stared in surprise at Tim, with a quick glance of recognition ; Mr. Knight looked at him also, and said to his clerk, "Is this the boy you spoke of, Mr. Philp?"

"Yes, sir."

"Good morning, my boy : what is your name?"

"Tim Maloney, yer honour."

"Uncle," whispered Geraldine, "it's the same boy that I told you of a long while ago, that came begging with his poor little sister. I expect he wants to get things for her. *Do* take him."

"Stop a minute, my darling," replied Mr. Knight, smiling, and turning from her to the Irish boy.—"You've not been accustomed to work in an office before, have you, Tim?"

"No, yer honour ; it's meself that's ignorant intirely : but I'm willing to larn, if ye'll put up wid taching me a little."

"Do ask him, uncle," whispered Geraldine again, full of impatience.

"You may ask him yourself, Geraldine."

"Little boy," said the child, going over to him, and gazing at him, with a beautiful look of loving interest in her face—"little boy, don't you know me? Don't you remember bringing your poor little sister to our door? How is she now? It's a long while ago, and you never came again."

Tim's blue eyes looked into the blue eyes that watched him so eagerly. He coloured to the roots of his hair, and then said, "Ah, me little lady, I remimber ye well, and yer kindness to my little darlint Nelly ; but it's

meself was an idle, bad boy then, and should have been now, but for his honour, Mr. Waterhouse, who tould me about the dhrink; and his honour there," and he pointed to his teacher at the desk, "who taught me the blessed reading and writing, and all about the Bible."

"And now you wish to be a good boy, and work for a living, don't you, Tim?" continued Geraldine earnestly; "and I'm *so* glad, and uncle's going to help you; are you not, uncle?"

"Yes, Geraldine, I hope so," said Mr. Knight kindly. "If Tim is a good steady lad, honest and industrious, and continues to follow the advice of his kind friends, he shall never want opportunity to get on, so far as I can give it to him."

"And yer honour's too good to Tim Maloney, intirely," said the Irish boy sobbing, and burying his face in his hands; perhaps the unexpected presence of the beautiful child, perhaps some indescribable tone of affection, perhaps these kind assurances had melted his heart. At all events, the bright tears trickled through his fingers, as he sat there, while a sunbeam stole across the gloomy room, and turned them into rare and sparkling diamonds, reflecting beauty, light, and radiance.

"I'm *so* glad Tim has come to you, uncle," said Geraldine, as they retreated into Mr. Knight's private room, after she had bidden Tim "not to cry, for all would be so happy now."

"You have taken a strange interest in him, quite a fancy to this poor boy, Geraldine."

"Have I, uncle? He is a nice-looking boy; don't

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you think so? And he was *so* kind to the little girl that day; he gave her everything that was nicest."

"I must take you down with me presently to Mr. Christie's, Geraldine; he is confined to the house with a cough. Minnie will be glad to see you, my child."

"Oh, that will be nice, uncle," said the merry child; "I want to see Minnie very much, and I do like their garden by the river."

On account of Mrs. Christie's health, her husband had removed his family to Putney, so that Geraldine saw much less of her friend Minnie than formerly, though even now the little girls often met; for Mr. Knight was ever glad to take Geraldine about with him, when there was the least excuse to give to his sister for a day's neglect of lessons. Geraldine sat through an hour or two, reading a book, while her uncle wrote his letters; then he produced from a cupboard a plate of oranges and a bottle of wine, dispatched Tim to the confectioner's for a cake, and gave himself up to half-an-hour's pleasant talk with his darling child over their lunch. "I suppose Minnie wouldn't take any wine if she were here," said Geraldine, as she ate an orange Mr. Knight had just peeled for her; "and do you know, uncle, I think she is almost right. What do we want with wine, when we have such delicious fruits?"

"You dear little innocent," laughed Mr. Knight, "we want to preserve our fruits, don't we? Why does cook make preserves? that we may have something fruity to eat in winter. Why do we make wine? that we may have something fruity and pleasant to *drink* in winter. Don't you see, Geraldine? It is all very plain. I don't

blame Minnie ; she is a very good, dear child, and sees as plainly, as I *don't* see, that it is her duty not to drink anything that intoxicates, because of the mischief these drinks cause when taken to excess ; but come, Geraldine, we must end our lunch, or we shall not catch the 1.40 train. Here, dear, take out a piece of cake and an orange to Mr. Philp ; and you may, if you like, take some to Tim also."

"Oh, thank you, uncle." She carried out Mr. Philp's lunch on a plate, and without waiting for his thanks hurried back, caught up a piece of cake in one hand and a large orange in the other, and hastened out to Tim.

"Here, Tim, this is for your lunch ; have you been home to dinner?"

"Lunch comes before dinner generally, Geraldine," laughed Mr. Knight, as he came out of his office and locked the door. Tim was prevented the difficulty of a reply to his little questioner by her uncle's haste, and with many thanks sounding in her ears, she ran after Mr. Knight as he disappeared. The truth was, Tim had not gone home to dinner, knowing well that the cupboard was empty, and that there was no money in his mother's purse. Kind Mr. Philp, guessing this, had given Tim a penny to buy his dinner, and he had fared rather better than usual on a portion of the loaf he had bought, keeping a little piece for Nelly's supper, if he found her on his return crying and hungry. Now, having still a somewhat good appetite himself, he ate the piece of bread that was in his pocket, and with a glad heart kept the orange and cake for his little sister. He saw no more of Geraldine that day, for on their return from Putney, late

in the evening, Mr. Knight, of course, went home. They had dined with the Christies; and Minnie and Geraldine had had a long and important talk that afternoon in the pretty garden by the river. The result of their conversation Geraldine made known to her uncle, as she sat, on the return journey, comfortably curled up amongst the cushions of a first-class railway-carriage.

"Uncle, I'm not going to drink any more wine."

"So, so, little Geraldine, what now?"

"Minnie has been telling me of such lots of sad things: ladies who drink and neglect their little children. Oh, and uncle, there's a gentleman next door to them at Putney, and when he gets drunk he beats his wife, and they hear her scream sometimes; is it not dreadful? I don't want to have anything to do with such dreadful things. Do you think I ought, uncle? You said once you did not mind my being a teetotaller, if I wished, and so I've taken the pledge of Minnie, and her mamma was a witness; so it's all right."

Mr. Knight laughed heartily. "Quite a business affair, Geraldine; what made you so particular to have it witnessed, eh, dear child?"

"I thought it was right, uncle. I thought you never signed things without a witness."

"Is Mrs. Christie a teetotaller, Geraldine?"

"No, uncle; because the doctor orders it for her. She says, when she gets well she means to be. I shall tell Mr. Philp, because he is one, and he'll be glad to know that I am."

"But now you're a Band of Hope child, I suppose, aren't you; a regular young Hopeful?"

Geraldine's face grew rather grave. "You do quite like me to be one, don't you, uncle? because I wouldn't have signed else."

"Oh yes, dear; I think it may be quite best for you," answered Mr. Knight. Then he added playfully, "You are so quick and impetuous, that if you were to take to drink champagne, I should feel afraid I should lose you altogether. You would go off in a sort of effervescing fury, or fly into the air like a human balloon, and I should never catch you again, my little Geraldine. So it's all best for you to be steadied by your teetotal ballast; only you must not preach to Aunt Knight."

CHAPTER VIII.

TIM'S PARENTS.

IT is necessary that we should go back for about fourteen years in our story, to introduce you to Tim's parents in their happy and prosperous days, before the grim sister shadows of sin, and care, and poverty had settled over their dwelling, and cast their sombre reflection on the once light-hearted Timothy and Ellen Maloney.

Any one travelling among the Killarney lakes at that distance of time, might have noticed a small farm-house, situated in one of the loveliest spots of that most lovely neighbourhood. Under one of the hills, and facing a small bright lake, that lay amongst the green softly undulating meadows, like a jewel on the fair bosom of a beauteous maiden; sheltered by arbutus trees, whose small white waxen flowers and brilliant scarlet fruit contrasted exquisitely with the dark rich green of their glossy leaves; surrounded by well-tilled corn-fields and luxuriant pasturage, this little homestead seemed fit to be the very abode of peace, prosperity, and love.

The lease of this farm had been left, along with their father's blessing, to the twin-brothers, Patrick and Timothy Maloney, who together ploughed their few but fertile acres, and, with the assistance of three or four labourers, gathered in the bounteous harvests. In their youth, the lads had both signed the temperance pledge, under Father Matthew at Cork, and received the good priest's handsome medals, with his blessing, which they prized still more; but Timothy, on his wedding-day, broke his pledge, at the entreaties of his wife's father, and drank the health of his friends, in "just one glass" of whisky. The day which linked him to a fair and pretty girl, whose face was one of the sweetest and loveliest exponents of Irish charms, and whose temper, though quick, was generous and open—was (though it should have been the happiest) one of the darkest in Timothy's life. It awakened in him a terrible appetite, of which he had, till now, never dreamed; and it divided him from that perfect sobriety which had been one of the chief reasons of his hitherto successful career. But for a few years all apparently went well; the brothers were industrious, and Pat still kept his pledge, and thus often shielded Timothy from risk and temptation. The little household had been increased, within a year of the wedding, by the appearance of a fine healthy baby boy, our young friend Tim—at whose birth more whisky was drunk, and the maternal grandfather memorialised the occasion by a drunken orgie which ended in his death. Still the brothers worked on, in much affection and happiness, for they were devoted to each other, and Patrick was ever alive to his brother's

true interests. While the green corn waved in luxuriance in the fields, and the well-fed pigs and poultry met a ready sale at the neighbouring markets; while Ellen's rich butter was had in repute amongst all the visitors at the hotels; while the patch of flax, with its bright blue flowers, yielded her useful and profitable employment during the long winter evenings, all seemed prosperous enough; the sun shone on the little lake, cresting every wavelet with golden filagree —it made the scarlet arbutus berries blaze with beauty. It shone too on the young mother's bright hair, as she played with her boy; and the tinkling of the sheep bell on the distant hills, the lowing of the oxen, the sedate bark of the old dog, the songs of the birds, the gentle rustling of the summer breeze, mingled with Ellen Maloney's merry laughter and the baby's gleeful cries, as they romped together before the cottage door, making a happy joyous wave of sound, that seemed to have its ebb and flow in the ocean of heavenly music. But, alas! the clouds were gathering over this bright picture, the discordant notes were awakening amidst the harmonies. Some jealousy at the success of the brothers Maloney in their farm operations, had crept into the heart of Ellen's brother, who rented a farm of about the same size, of the same non-resident landlord, on the opposite side of the lake. This man, like his father before him, was much given to drink. He knew that the only way to compass the ruin of Timothy Maloney, whose marriage to his sister, for some petty reason of his own, he had never approved, was to make him drunk, and incite him to quarrel. Timothy, when sober, was easy and good tempered, but when drunk, excitable and passionate. It

would not be difficult, so thought Peter O'Connor, to make him utter hard, dangerous words against the steward when in his cups; and then, if that sneaking temperance brother of his would but leave the place, he might himself get what he wanted, the lovely little homestead, the fertile acres, and the fruitful orchards. It was a diabolical scheme, conceived by a mean and cruel heart, and fostered, as evil is sure to be, by every potation of the fiery spirit in which he indulged. Surely it is hard enough for men and women to keep pure, and true, and noble in heart, even with the holiest aspirations and the least conceit of their own powers; hard enough when God's Spirit dwells in them, and their lives are free from all indulgence in strong drink; why, then, should any dare to approve of poor fallen human beings increasing their propensity to evil, lessening their desire for good, by the use of alcoholics? Why do not ministers of all denominations become reformers in this particular, and help to put down this powerful aid-de-camp of the devil in his designs to conquer the human soul?

Peter O'Connor met his brother-in-law at the market one golden autumn day. Tim carried a sample of wheat in his hand, and showed it to one and another with great pride. The ears were long and full, the golden sunbeams seemed still to linger in the mellow beauty of their tint. Peter praised, and seemed unusually good-tempered that day; he invited Timothy to dine with him, and the unsuspecting young farmer agreed to do so. He sold his produce, got various articles for Ellen and the boy, and their little household, purchased a new reaping hook for Patrick, and then partook of a good dinner at

the "O'Brien Arms." After that, it was not difficult to propose a bowl of punch, and over it Timothy began to open his heart, and speak of improvements that he and his brother contemplated, on their pretty little estate. Peter O'Connor advised him not to speak too loudly. If Mr. Harman, the English steward, heard of all these things, he would be for raising the rent; indeed, he had heard a rumour already that he proposed to do this as soon as ever the lease had expired on the Maloney's farm, a circumstance which would happen the following year. Timothy was irritated. At once, in no measured language, he cursed the "cruel foreign spy that came to blast the old counthry, and make beggars and paupers of her sons;" and as he grew still more drunk, used still more violent expressions. Peter O'Connor took care to have these repeated in the ears of Mr. Harman, and prejudiced his mind against the brothers so much, that he absolutely refused them the renewal of their lease, except at an almost immoderate rent. Patrick, sober, hard-working and industrious, could not comprehend the position of affairs. He went himself to Mr. Harman, pleaded how greatly they had improved the land, how much they had spent on it of their own money: but the steward was cold and inexorable, and on his return the young man, weary and dispirited, talked of emigration as their only hope, and pondered with much natural bitterness of soul over the wrongs of Ireland; while Mr. Harman congratulated himself that he was safely out of another interview with those hot-blooded, violent young Irish farmers, without any application of the shillelagh to his by no means robust frame.

Next morning Patrick came to a different conclusion. He had minutely calculated profit and loss in the quietude of his own room, with his slate before him, his eyes on the silver waters of the lake, and his heart aglow with patriotism and indignation. "He wouldn't leave ould Ireland if he could help it." And by straining here, and economy there, and harder work for himself in every direction, he thought even the increased rent might be forthcoming. So the brothers went together to the steward's office, and accepted, though with heavy hearts, the new lease on the new terms; and Mr. Harman again congratulated himself on having raised more money on the little estate for his employer; and of course concluded that "the farm must be worth it to them; if they really couldn't pay it, they would not have accepted my terms." But though, if Timothy Maloney had been as temperate as his brother, our little Tim, instead of being an errand-boy in the employ of Messrs. Knight and Christie, might have been running about on his father's farm in happy, healthful independence of body and mind—following the plough with a merry song, whistling in his boat on the lough, wearing the "green immortal shamrock" in his button-hole, and linen shirts of his mother's spinning on his back, and rollicking through a bright, happy life, as prosperous Irish boys are wont to do, yet all the diligence of Patrick Maloney was not enough to keep the wolf from the door, when the whisky tax as well as the land tax swallowed up their earnings. "Things went to ruin," as they are apt to do on the incline of dissipation, at express speed; and when poor Ellen Maloney lay helplessly in her bed, hushing to her

bosom her third child, an infant of two weeks old, the bailiffs were down-stairs taking an inventory of the goods and the property on the farm ; and it was only by earnest expostulations with the steward, on the part of the parish priest, that proceedings were stayed till the young mother had regained her strength, and the family could determine as to their future movements. Patrick, whose heart was made somewhat bitter by all the events that had occurred, spite of his noble efforts to save his family, sided now with his brother, and declared they had been cruelly and wickedly oppressed, talked of the tyranny of English laws, and the malice of English stewards, and ended by advising that they should all emigrate to America ; and " there, if Timothy would turn over a new leaf, remember his gold medal, and the promise to the blessed Father Matthew, and for ever renounce whisky, happiness might yet be in store for them, and they might become honoured and prosperous citizens of a new and flourishing state." But Timothy suggested London. He had heard that there was always work to be had in London ; gold to be earned easily with but little toil ; and he was inclined to recover from English employers some of the gold that Englishmen had wrung from his pocket. Patrick called this folly ; and for almost the first time in their lives the twin-brothers seriously disagreed, as to their plans for the future. But the quarrel did not last long ; and when Patrick sailed from Cork, in the good ship *Emerald Isle*, for the distant shores of America, he left Timothy on the quay sobbing like a child ; while Ellen and her three little ones clung around him, trying to comfort him, but only joining in

sad chorus, with many outbursts of wild, lamenting words. Another week, and they found themselves in London, amongst the noise, and confusion, and smoke of the great city—so different from the bright loveliness of their Irish home. It was no wonder that poor Timothy sickened and fell seriously ill; no wonder that the small amount of funds at his wife's disposal was soon all expended; and that, when the father arose from his bed, they were forced to leave the comparatively comfortable home they had engaged, and to seek shelter in mean lodgings near Candlemas Alley. In these hours of sorrow and perplexity Ellen Maloney, through dreadful ignorance, made matters a thousand times worse, by having recourse to whisky and gin—that curse of London wives and mothers—and so speedily reduced the family still lower in the social scale by a total neglect of that cleanliness and home decency which separate civilized man from savages.

Another sorrow had afflicted them since they trod English soil, and drunken Timothy added a fresh curse against all that was English whenever he thought of it. Their second child, a wee, toddling thing at the period of their removal, had strayed from her mother's side, and been lost in the labyrinth of the great city, through the streets of which the sorrowing parents had sought for her in vain.

The money that was to be obtained so readily in "rich" London had never found its way to Timothy Maloney's pocket; and for years now he had been living a hopeless, unhappy life, working as a mason's labourer, and reckoning whisky the one consolation of his existence, when it was the very author of his misery.

Now and then letters came from Patrick; but they seldom wrote to him. He always besought them to come to America, where he was getting on extremely well, and where he had married a young countrywoman, and settled down in much comfort, still keeping to his temperance pledge, and meaning evermore to do so. He was nationalized as an American, and meant to rise, step by step, to wealth and competence. He always enclosed a generous present; always offered to pay their expenses if they would come out; but the money of the industrious teetotaller went to pay old scores at the "Erin-go-bragh," and to keep some one of the many "glorious anniversaries," or saints' days, Irishmen delight to celebrate. Ellen Maloney had her share of her brother-in-law's gifts, and she filled her gin-bottle afresh, took some household articles out of pawn, and paid up the back rent and the bill at the baker's, and, with a sense of relief, went for an afternoon's carousal with her female companions in debauchery. You could now, at the distance of twelve years, have hardly recognized in the pallid, degraded looking woman whom her companions called "Irish Nell," and Tim called "mother," and loved still so generously, and with so much affection, the bright-haired, blue-eyed, fair sweet woman in her pleasant home beside the lakes of Killarney.

CHAPTER IX.

MISS CORNELIA KNIGHT.

"I REALLY cannot allow Geraldine to neglect her lessons so much, Tom. You will spoil the child if you take her about with you, and encourage her to abandon the habit of regular study. What *is* a woman fit for, who is ignorant of the history of her own country, and that of other nations, can only speak her own language, and has no knowledge of 'belles lettres?'"

"I am as anxious even as you can be, Cornelia, that Geraldine should receive the education of a lady, and that she should be well fitted to adorn any station in life; but I must say I can't see it is very important as yet that the little puss should be kept strictly at lessons The child is only eleven, Cornelia, and both boys and girls learn most, I believe, from twelve to eighteen, if they are not made prodigies of before."

"Very well, brother. Of course you can do as you like with her, but you must not be disappointed if she does not make rapid progress while things go on in this

fashion. You wished me to undertake her education, and I was perfectly willing to do so, having so much leisure time at my disposal; but I can't expect the young lady to do me much credit while she has at least two or three holidays every week."

Mr. Knight laughed. "I must reform my manners, and act more obediently, Cornelia. It requires some self-denial to give up the company of my darling child, even for her good; but it is very kind of you to be so ready to instruct her; and I must not prevent her from making good use of her time."

This was not the first conversation on the same subject which the merchant and his sister had held. Perhaps it *was* rather weak of Mr. Knight, but he could not resist the temptation to call up the bright colour into Geraldine's cheek, the merry light into her eyes, and the dancing smile round her sweet lips, by the proposal of some little excursion with himself. Very many times he had seriously disturbed Miss Knight's equanimity by entering the school-room just as books, and slates, and globes were ranged on the desk before his adopted child, and his sister was gravely explaining some problem to the young quiet listener. And when the door handle turned, and he entered, the child's face changed its expression instantly, and the light of joy played all over it, as Mr. Knight so loved to see. But the brow of Miss Knight clouded, and with a few words of expostulation she gave a reluctant consent to the proposed holiday, and retired abruptly from the scene. One morning this had been enacted, and Mr. Knight had carried off Geraldine in triumph, while Miss Cornelia retreated

to her boudoir and arranged her German books on the table before her for some hours of quiet study. A feeling of annoyance at her brother's conduct, a sense that he was trifling with her precious time, made her uncomfortable, and somewhat perplexed, as she sat down to her work. She glanced round the little room so exquisitely and tastefully furnished with all a woman and a student could desire; she remembered whose purse and whose kind hands had been at her disposal in the preparation of that quiet sanctum, and she softened towards her brother almost instantly; she was ashamed to admit how jealous she had felt of the beautiful, loving, warm-hearted child who now shared that brother's care.

The window of the room overlooked a large garden, a remnant of the old days of London, when land was not such a costly possession as now. This house and garden had been in the family of the Knights ever since Woburn Square was built, and lately its owners had resolutely refused repeated applications to use it for building ground. The breakfast parlour opened into a beautiful conservatory, and there were a green-house and summer-house in the somewhat smoky, shady garden; and two tall elm trees spoke of the poetry and beauty of the seasons to Miss Knight as she sat daily in her boudoir to study. She was one of the very few women who love study purely for its own sake, apart from all ideas of profit, usefulness, power, or praise. If she had had no one to teach, no one to improve, no one to admire her, no one in whose presence to shine—if she had been a feminine Robinson Crusoe on a desert island—she would still have studied; it was her passion. And, of all her

studies, history was the favourite. Language was a subordinate branch, and it was in order to read untranslated the national histories of Greece, Rome, Germany, and France, that she had, in some considerable degree, conquered the difficulties of their respective languages. She read eagerly and quickly, retaining the dates of events with remarkable precision, for her memory was singularly retentive. She was somewhat shy, and very reserved; but when drawn out to converse with a sympathizing listener on her favourite subjects, was extremely brilliant, so that she not unfrequently became the centre of an admiring circle, to whom she would describe, with considerable eloquence and power, the historic scenes of other days and other lands. Her temper was passionate and unbending; there wanted the sweet charity of the merchant's character in the mind of his sister. Miss Cornelia was a good woman, a Christian woman; but faults and failings are not absent from us because we desire to follow Christ, else where would be the need for the struggles and conflicts which must take place again and again before our characters are perfected? Her strong, sensible nature had no sympathy with those who knew better, and yet fell from their high estate. She would have infinitely more mercy for an uneducated sinner than for a well-trained one, even where the temptation to sin had been immensely greater in the latter case than the former. She *could* not forgive those whom she imagined saw the light before them, and wilfully preferred darkness; and if the sun were eclipsed to her own vision, she never imagined it shone for another. Her own standard of right was, she believed, founded on the Bible; *she* never

wilfully wavered from it; and all who did were gross sinners. She did not stop to consider whether she could be the judge of all circumstances and all characters; each acquaintance was brought rigidly up to the standard —if he fell from its height, or could not reach it, woe be to him!

Many loving matrons said that Cornelia's only fault was one which might have been cured by matrimony. If she had felt small warm hands encircling her neck; if she had experienced the thrill of joy a mother feels as she clasps her first-born to her breast; if she had had to caress a fond husband, and indulge him in his whims; if she had wept over a baby's sick couch; if she had trembled at the shortcoming of one child, and the exuberant folly of another, and loved them dearly, spite of all; she would, they thought, have been fifty times more charitable to the sinner, more pitying, more compassionate, more Christ-like. And these kind natures prophesied great things when Mr. Knight brought home the little Geraldine to entwine around the hearts of the bachelor and his sister, parental thoughts, and hopes, and wishes. "True," they said, "Mr. Knight wants no softening; his heart is as loving and gentle as any woman's, but it will be certain to improve Miss Cornelia."

And, doubtless, it had done so; it had afforded her new, and pleasant, and womanly cares; it had widened her sympathies, and given her an additional something to love; and she was really kind to Geraldine, only so coldly *just* in the punishments meted out for her small follies, that the child could never love her as much as she wished to do. They would get on admirably for

weeks, sometimes, without a break in their union, and then a trifling misdemeanour, on Geraldine's part, would be followed by such a severe reproof from Miss Knight, that the little girl would lose all hope of pleasing her, and would take refuge in the warm heart and loving words of Uncle Knight with an eagerness that almost startled him.

There had been a romance in Miss Knight's life—has there not been in almost every one's? She had loved in early youth, when life had just begun to wear its brightest and most beautiful colours. There had been a perfect unison of heart and feeling with a young cousin, fresh from his honours at the university; but before their vows had been exchanged, necessity had compelled them to part. Before they met again, a beautiful and fascinating woman — an actress at a theatre — held him enchained. The grave, studious Cornelia, clever and brilliant though she occasionally was, was forgotten for awhile—forgotten till the words were spoken and the deed was done, that separated them for ever. Too late, he had awakened from his dream; too late, he knew that Cornelia was more to him than the gay dancer, the enchanting actress; and too late, he knew that his sunniest memories must ever encircle the beloved companion of his early manhood. Cornelia began to despise the man she had loved. She tore her love for him from her heart with a forced and bitter laugh, and told herself that she was thankful to have escaped such a doom; triumphed in the Christian principle that enabled her to do it; and, henceforth, wondered at and blamed all the silly, loving women who

show themselves *weak* in love matters. If they can't conquer their feelings and resist the inroads of affection, they should learn to *compel* their hearts. Miss Knight would have become, at this juncture, altogether morose, prudish, and disagreeable, had it not been that she was, as we have said, really good; also that she had for her immediate associate her pure-minded, true-hearted brother. Thomas and Cornelia Knight were orphans. Their father had died more than twenty years before, leaving the family in embarrassed circumstances. Thomas, who was his partner, surmounted all difficulties, brought the business into a more flourishing condition than it had ever been in during his father's life-time, owing to the old gentleman's dislike to all changes and innovations, took a young man as partner, and continued to maintain a comfortable home for his widowed mother and only surviving sister. Cornelia loved him devotedly. It was the one affection of her heart on which she seemed to place no reservations, no trammels. She often thought him Quixotic and unwise in his good deeds; but she never interfered with them beyond a remonstrance; and even now that he was, as she considered, treating Geraldine so injudiciously, she hid from him much of the chagrin she felt. She had given up to the child three hours of every morning—from ten to one o'clock—and proved herself a delightful and interesting teacher in many branches of study; but Geraldine loved music, and poetry, and drawing, more than history and languages; laws and governments were of no interest to her; battles, though they were dreadful, and haunted her imagination, had a weird fascination for her; and her

eyes sparkled and her cheeks glowed as she read, with enthusiasm, the story of some mighty deed of valour; but her sympathies were always with the weak, the erring, the sad. Miss Cornelia could not arouse in her any enthusiasm for high birth. No one cared more than Miss Knight for a pedigree that dated from the Conqueror; but Geraldine would ask, with the utmost simplicity, "But, auntie, do you *like* William and his cruel followers, that turned out the poor Britons and Saxons from their dear old homes? I don't want to have been descended from them. I would rather be one of Boadicea's children; she was so good and brave, and yet so unfortunate." And Miss Knight would answer, "O Geraldine, will you never understand that these Normans were cultivated, polite men compared with the rude boors that tilled English soil before they arrived. Would you not rather have for an ancestor a nobleman or a gentleman, than an uneducated serf?"

"Would it make much matter, aunt, if I myself was a lady?"

"You don't understand me;" and Miss Knight was silent.

"Auntie dear, weren't the Normans sea-kings, rovers, pirates, first of all? How could they be real gentlemen?"

"They had become refined, polished, cultured," replied Miss Knight; "fitted in every way to adorn a court; but we will not discuss the point further. You may go on now with your exercise, Geraldine."

"I don't think auntie answered me much," thought Geraldine; but she took up her pen, and her thoughts were soon turned into another channel.

Miss Knight pushed her fingers through her dark hair, drawing it back tightly from her brow, and plunged into her book. Her dark brown, earnest eyes darted from one line to the other with great rapidity; her determined, somewhat compressed, lips were very grave and serious. Her complexion was still blooming; and her small, slight figure and general appearance were more youthful than that of most women of forty—Miss Knight's age on the family tree; which she was far too sensible to care about the whole world's knowing, if they had any desire to be acquainted with so unimportant a matter. Perhaps, as you watch her sitting there, her well-shaped head bending slightly over her book, her pleasant face absorbed in her occupation, her intellectual brow full of thought, you will feel that we have wronged her. She looks, you say, womanly, lovable, true; and, so contradictory are all human characters, in some of Cornelia Knight's moods you are more right in your estimate than we in ours. Her virtues are indeed many;—she intends ever to be candid and just; she would sacrifice anything for justice; alas! she forgets how impossible it is, in some most serious cases, for man to judge his fellow aright; and that it is pride, and not humility, which leads us often to reach forward to that attribute of the Almighty, and think we have grasped it with our puny hands!

CHAPTER X.

MARKETING IN THE NEW CUT.

TIM had had a week's wages from Mr. Knight; so, after his scanty supper, he took little Nelly in his arms and went out. It was a glorious contrast to the children's eyes from the dark, dingy, comfortless home to that long street, glaring with gas, and busy with the noisy hum of human life: the perpetual chorus of the butchers and their apprentices, "Buy, buy!" the counter-chorus of the greengrocers, "Turnips, carrots, a penny a bunch!" and the vendors of innumerable small wares at "only a penny!" the bright chandeliers and coloured lights of the flaring gin-palaces, and their general aspect of warmth and comfort to the poor, and hungry, and naked who stood without; the ceaseless passing and repassing throng of busy housewives, marketing-men, and little children;—all made a panorama that amused Nelly and interested Tim. The air was somewhat cold and frosty, and made a pause before the warm gas-lit shops all the more welcome. Tim had sixpence in his pocket to spend;

one penny was soon gone in roasted chestnuts—purchased from an old acquaintance in his court, who was an honest boy, and had taken to this means of gaining a livelihood.

"Here, Tim, I'll give you two over, for friendship's sake," said the lad, as the boy and his little sister paused before the small charcoal fire.

"It's I that'll not be taking an unfair advantage of a frind," said Tim, resolutely, putting back the offered fruit.

"You won't refuse them for little Nelly," said the lad, kissing the pale cheek of the child, who smiled sweetly upon him—a smile that seemed more of heaven than earth, and drew your thoughts away from the bustle and din of the crowd around, to the Home that was surely nearly ready to receive and shelter, for ever, her fragile little form.

"For Nelly," said Tim, with Irish politeness; "och, bless your heart, thin, for a kindness to the little one; and may ye niver want a roasted chestnut as long as ye live."

The proprietor of the charcoal stove laughed merrily, and the boys shook hands as they parted.

A little further on, just where a smaller street branched off from the New Cut, a man was mounted on a low stool, endeavouring to sell umbrellas to a large and attentively listening crowd. His attitude, appearance, and language were of the Cheap Jack school; but he flattered less and abused more than the majority of that strange fraternity. Tim and Nelly paused again. Tim's eyes devoured greedily the fair proportions of the neat

umbrella held up to view; but he was well aware that the stock of coppers in his pocket would not purchase the coveted article.

"What do you think of that?" said the man, confidently and confidentially. "Do you suppose that umbrella is made for nothing?—a neat, genteel, well-set, well-ordered, handsome umbrella of that style, sound, and of the very best material. Just take it in your hand, and tell me your opinion of it? I offer you such an umbrella—best whalebone, best silk, best everything—for four-and-sixpence; the same umbrella that they put in the windows in Regent Street for half-a-guinea; the very same texture, durability, and all. Now, then, who says four-and-six for this remarkably cheap article? Nobody? Poor fellows, I pity you. What! not afford to pay four-and-six for an umbrella that'll do to escort your young woman under, to talk to your friend under, to make your purchases under, however hard the rain is outside. Well, you can't help the narrowness of your purses, I suppose—let's alter the figure, and say four shillings. What! not pay that for a beautiful umbrella that'll shelter a whole family from a hail storm?"

"Och, shure thin, they need be very small!" said Tim.

"Come, what poverty-stricken creatures you are!" said the man angrily. "Here, then, listen to this: I'll offer it to you for three-and-six, and at that it's a shameful sacrifice. No offer! Oh, you are a set of fools—all of you!" The men grinned, and looked half-ashamed of themselves; but they still stood to hear the remainder of the fluent harangue, while the umbrella-man flapped his vaunted article again and again, like a bat, in their

faces, to prove its wondrous strength and capacity, then, holding it aloft, proclaimed his resolution, sooner than have the trouble of carrying it home again, to sell it for three shillings. But even this magnificent decrease in price did not tempt a purchaser; and he got down from his rostrum in well-feigned anger, and flourished said umbrella amongst the throng. Going back again to his post, he called out, "If I had known what a poor, miserable, sneaking, deplorable, despicable, poverty-stricken set of fools I was coming amongst to-night, I would have stayed at home, or honoured some more liberal souls with my company. What do you think of this umbrella now at two-and-six? Half-a-crown! Who ever heard of such a ridiculous price as half-a-crown for a seamless, sound-boned, well-made umbrella?"—and again he flapped it in and out a dozen times in their faces, while his congregation smiled good-temperedly at his rudeness, or his impudence. "Nobody? *Nobody* got two-and-six to spend on an umbrella? Go away! You deserve that the sky should cloud over, and the rain pour down in torrents before you reach home. Look out to-morrow, if it's a wet Sunday, and see your young woman's ribbons all spoiled for want of an umbrella, which her stingy lover won't give her! If you are a married man, look at little Polly's new hat, and see what the rain has made of that! Oh, you poor short-sighted people, that'll eat and drink up all your money, and never get an article of comfort from one week's end to another. Let's see if there's anybody with two shillings here. Not? Well, then, one-and-ten; that's the very lowest I shall offer it for. It's an absurd

thing to sell a silk umbrella for one-and-ten ; but you're such a set of poor dogs, I don't know what else to do. Not even a bid now ! Say one-and-nine then ; a penny is a great thing, I suppose, to you poverty-stricken ones. One-and-six then ! Who'll bid one-and-six ? I suppose you are not in the habit of carrying silver about with you. Why, come, I'd better give it to you, and show charity to the poorest, meanest set of people under the sun, not to mention London."

At this a man holds out his hand for the umbrella, pays the one-and-six for the superior article worth half-a-guinea, and only gets abuse for his pains.

"One-and-six. Well, a man with the heart of a Christian wouldn't have made me talk so long for one-and-six ; but what else can you expect from a set of ignoramuses and fools ?—Now, gentlemen, what do you think of this little article ?" and he takes up from his pile another umbrella. But Tim has had enough, and walks away. The umbrella, even at one-and-six, is out of his reach at present ; and his Irish blood does not like to be called a "fool." He has felt almost ready, once or twice, to knock the fellow down, only he is too big for him to attempt such a feat ; and, besides, there is little Nelly.

On again, through the thickly-peopled street—which looks more like a noisy fair than an ordinary market—and they pause again at another opening.

"Like to know your weight, gentlemen ? Only a penny. Like to try your weight, sir ?"

"Who'll view the starry skies—Saturn and rings, Jupiter and moons, and the glorious orb that enlightens our

midnight darkness—for the small sum of one penny? Now then, gentlemen, now then!—a glorious practical, optical lesson in astronomy for one penny!"

The philosopher of the telescope and the master of weights and measures are side by side, doing a brisk trade; though the philosopher has the best of it, for a crowd of eager applicants stand around him, anxious for one closer peep at beautiful Nature on this clear night. A heavy-looking young man seats himself in the weighing-chair. The owner of this machine looks anxiously at his figures.

"Capital weight, sir; capital weight. Eleven stone six. You never need fear to be out of work, sir. Any employer of labour would be glad to have a young man who weighs eleven stone six."

But Tim is intently gazing at the glorious stars in the dark sky above; the penny has been paid; and the peep, though only for about a minute—and the old philosopher is inexorable as to time—opens up to his mind a world of glory and beauty which he had never realized before. It does not seem so difficult to believe in what Mr. Philp has been teaching him of the eternal greatness and goodness of God in creation, when those dazzling golden eyes are looking so closely into his own.

"Now then, young gentleman, you've had your penny-worth, and a good one too. Make way, if *you* please. Here's the little girl."

And Tim silently lifts Nelly into his arms, and moves on. He pauses now at a small narrow building, the window full of portions of the Bible, and tracts, and the "British Workman," and "Band of Hope Review."

Over the door is marked "Bible and Tract Depository." He enters the shop.

"I should like a part of the Bible about the stars, I'm thinkin'. Can I be afther getting it for a penny?"

"There's more about the stars in Job or the Psalms than any other books."

"And that is Bible?"

The young woman smiles. "Oh yes; they are books of the Bible, a penny each."

"I'll take them both, if ye plase."

Tim makes the exchange gladly for those two neatly-covered little volumes, the first he has ever purchased. He puts them in his pocket.

"Would you like to go into the room inside?" asks the young woman. "They are showing a magic lantern, with Bible scenes; and it won't cost you anything."

Tim nodded, and led little Nelly in. The room was dark, save for the gay picture on the wall illustrating a scene in the life of the patriarch Joseph, at which the children gazed eagerly. A city missionary was reading appropriate portions of the history of Joseph from the Bible as the pictures changed, and expounding where he thought it necessary as he went on. This lasted for nearly an hour; and then Tim and Nelly were in the busy street again.

"I wish," thought Tim, "that mother had been there. There isn't such things in the gin-shop for her to see at all at all. Maybe if they got good places, all bright and pretty, like they do where they sell the dhrink, and sold them the tay and coffee, some of the people wouldn't care about the gin and whisky shops any more."

But even as he thought this, the brilliant light from the red lamps of one of them cast a gleam on the pavement outside, and through the open door, where a human form staggered out with a wild shout of mirthless laughter, Tim could see a crowd of folk beside the counter—aged and withered, gay and young, little children, tidy-looking women, artisan husbands and fathers, and wild youths, making up a dreadful group of sin, past, present, and future ; and the boy, sharpened by sad experience and his Band of Hope teaching, read the sad sight rightly, and shuddered as he gazed.

Then he entered for a little while the temperance meeting held every Saturday evening in this thickly-peopled district. A good many were standing round the door, and the large space inside was nearly full ; for a justly popular lecturer stood on the platform singing a cheerful temperance melody, in the chorus of which the people joined heartily. Tim recognized his teacher in a seat behind the speaker, and, when at length their eyes met, received a pleasant smile of recognition. How earnestly Tim's young heart joined in the sentiment of the song ! How he thanked God, in his simple, child-like fashion, that there were efforts put forth which might reach some day the dissolute mother whom, spite of her evil habits, Tim still clung to with all the warmth of his affectionate nature.

Out from the meeting, and on again ! Another crowd, where a man of acute though evil, cruel countenance—sharp-nosed, sharp-eyed, with a trick of glancing behind him—was beguiling his listeners by tempting offers into a species of gambling. He sold a box, he said, contain-

ing a ring and a fourpenny bit, for a penny. "A regular cheat," thought Tim at first; but as he listened, the man's plausibility gained upon him.

"Is there any harm in wishing to be rich?" he began. "If there is, some of our most pious countrymen, whom we should all take as examples, are guilty of such a weakness; and we assuredly need not fear to follow *them*. I offer you, in this little box, a ring, and it may be a fourpenny bit. I don't promise you anything; but I say, if you take this box for one penny, you will most likely find what I have said inside. Who'll try?"

A boy beside Tim paid the penny, and took the box he offered.

"Look in," said the by-standers; "see what you've got."

He opened it. There crept over his face a shadow of disappointment; but he said nothing, and got behind the crowd. A man noticed it, and spoke aloud to his companion: "He's a regular swindler; diddles the boys out of their money, and then laughs at them. He's got no fourpenny bits."

"Hear that!" cried the ring-seller, with a great show of righteous indignation. "Hear that man, who dares to LIE under the beautiful calm of this starry night! Look up, man, and remember what is written in the Holy Book, 'Liars shall have their part in the lake of fire,' 'No liar shall inherit the kingdom of God.' Recollect *that* when you endeavour to injure the character of a fellow-creature."

Tim was surprised: he unconsciously felt attracted by this solemn tone and these decided words. He

went up to the man, put a penny into his hand, and received in return the coveted box. He looked in: sure enough, there was a gilt ring and a fourpenny bit at the bottom.

"It's I that'll have anither of yer boxes, sir," said Tim; "and good luck to ye for bringing the silver within reach of the likes of me."

Tim put the second penny in the man's hand; took another box in return; glanced into it—only the worthless little ring.

"Try again?" questioned the ring-seller.

"No, thank ye; I'll let well alone, with many thanks for the same," said Tim, chuckling and smiling in the man's face. But there was no response: he swore at the boy, as he turned away with little Nelly, and made Tim look in surprise when he remembered the Bible words he had so freely used but a minute before. "Not every one that saith unto Me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of My Father who is in heaven." It was the text that Tim had learned at school the Sunday before, and it came into his mind at this moment. Perhaps this blasphemer, who quoted Scripture so glibly, had been once, as he was now, a Sunday-school scholar. Should he ever sink into a being who would steal the pence of the poor, and hungry, and wretched, and give them empty hopes and useless rings in exchange?

What a number of rogues there were in this New Cut Market! The butchers—were they not palming off poor meat under their flaring gas-lights? Were not those stale turnips and carrots that the housewives

coveted so eagerly for the children's dinner on the morrow? Did not the thick paper find room in the scale with the marvellously cheap pennyworths of candy? Were not the second-hand clothes that hung waving to and fro, like gaunt skeletons of the tailor's art, carefully seamed and pieced, so that sharp eyes even were deceived? And the re-created boots — were they as sound and durable as their vendors professed? The penny toys — would they bear the children's handling? The cheap groceries—would they endure the scrutiny of the analyst?

But there was a margin of good in exchange for the hardly-earned coin in all these instances. What shall be said for the keepers of the gin-palaces; for the heartless, covetous race of men who are content to purposely inveigle their fellow-beings into paying their "money for that which is not bread, and their labour for that which satisfieth not;" men who are, alas! backed by philanthropical brewers and professedly Christian distillers, yet who, daily and hourly, save for the brief pause through midnight hours and on the blessed Sabbath mornings, do their utmost to demoralize the inhabitants of the metropolis, and who work their worst designs on those who should be most shielded from wrong and harm—the young, the helpless, the homeless, the wretched, and the poor? How can youth be innocent, how can manhood be noble, how can womanhood be pure, with these incitements to vice, and immorality, and crime, and disease constantly surrounding them? How is it possible that unconscious, unprincipled, or prematurely-vicious childhood—giddy girls and boys and careworn

men and women—should be firm enough to make a stand against the most insinuating of temptations to evil, which are legalized and permitted by the highest and most learned in the land?

For one moment Tim's troubles must be our text for an earnest appeal to our Christian readers. Is it not difficult enough for children to do rightly when they are subjected to the most careful Christian training — when the sweet tones of pure-hearted mothers lead their young minds to God in prayer—when their own musical voices echo in the parents' ears songs of love and praise to the tender Shepherd of the little lambs, and the father of the household dedicates them to their heavenly Father renewedly every morning around the family altar? Are there not sins enough, and tears enough, and quarrels enough in the happiest nurseries, in the pleasantest homes? Is it not difficult to keep up a pure and holy standard of thought amongst the best-inclined young people? Do not the most advanced Christians feel intensely and increasingly the constant struggle that must be maintained in their own hearts if they would "come off more than conquerors, through Him who hath loved them?" And yet, with all this knowledge of human depravity, this constant tendency to sin within us—which grieves, and must ever grieve, the purest, the best, and the nearest to God—we allow such children as little Tim, such men and women as Timothy and Ellen Maloney, to be surrounded with those glaring enticements to evil which stand at almost every corner of every street; instead of throwing around the poor, the degraded, the wanton, the sunken, the miserable, a golden cordon of love—which can be best

done by instant action in that blessed cause of temperance, which would remove the greatest exterior incentive to vice from the cities and homes of our land!

The weight of responsibility that lies on the shoulders of every Christian man and woman, and even of every Christian child, in this respect, did not, however, fill Tim's mind as he turned from the ring-seller. He was full of thought at the strange, incongruous mixture of Scripture and swearing that seemed to be in the man's mind and on his lips, until his attention was again attracted by another crowd. Little Nelly's head was resting on his shoulder, and her little form lay more heavily in his arms, for she was fast asleep; but he paused amongst the numerous listeners around a man who, mounted on some slight elevation, held aloft a number of printed papers—periodicals, magazines, and sheets of songs. At the moment Tim drew near, his grave, sad countenance, shaded by long black hair, moustache, and beard, was fixed upon a youth before him, whom he was lecturing in the following language:—

"How would you like it—just consider, reflect, for one moment—how would you like it, if you were selling papers for the maintenance of your sick wife and little ones, to be interrupted by a coarse, brutal ignoramus, who neither knew how to read himself nor cared that others should do so? Now—I—say—" (these words were repeated slowly, and with great emphasis, while his dark, mournful eyes were fixed upon the lad's upturned, half-ashamed, half-laughing face)—"how would you like it—answer me?"

Of course, there was no reply.

"I appeal to you, ladies and gentlemen. You know me; you don't need that I should explain myself. I offer you, for a penny, the whole collection of popular songs known as 'My Song Book,' and on this sheet another celebrated collection, the twelfth edition of 'Sam's Melodist.' Besides these I have the very interesting and romantic history of 'The Nun' in two volumes, one penny each; also the 'Bride Elect,' and other tales. You know I foster no evil feelings; I desire to forgive my enemies. A man with a sick wife and several children needs many friends; I have *not* many friends: I desire *you* should be my friends and your own friends at the same time, and purchase these desirable books. I will not even allow this youth, who most cruelly interrupted me, to be my enemy. You would not intentionally injure me?" Again he looks down into the upturned face, "I thought not; only"—with great pathos—"you know you must expect, however low a man may have sunk through unavoidable misfortune, that, if stepped upon, he will turn again; even the worm does this: the crushed worm, writhing beneath the torturing heel of a cruel oppressor, turns upon him. But now you are sorry—so am I; we will say no more. You will carry these papers round for me, and allow the gentlemen to look at them, and especially the ladies." There was a weary smile of gallantry upon his face. "I knew you would; thank you. You will never interrupt me again, I know."

"That's a gintleman," thought Tim. "Och, but he has a sad eye, and a pleasant smile underneath his moustache. I'll thry my luck wid him. Give me the best pennyworth

for a penny, yer honour," he said, reaching out his hand, and receiving in exchange for the fourpenny-bit threepence and "Sam's Melodist."

It was nearly eleven o'clock. There was singing and dancing going on in a room not far off, "one penny admission," and boys and girls were still flocking in. Tim hesitated: he had an Irishman's love for a blithesome jig; and it did his heart of hearts good, he declared, to hear the merry music of "Biddy the basket-woman." Six months ago he would have entered without a pause; now his teacher's warnings against these low haunts resounded in his ears. He turned from the temptation that was, even at that hour, mixed up with drink and obscenity, bringing ruin and disgrace to innocent children, who had come, tempted by the hope of "fun," and had found it, instead, veiled death. Nelly was still sleeping, and hung heavily in his arms; and for her sake, perhaps, as much as for his teacher's, Tim left behind him the glaring lights, the noise, the bustle, the music, the glitter, the gaiety, and only paused to expend one penny of his money in a loaf, another in a toy for his little sister, and a halfpenny in sweets, before he turned down the dark, dirty, dismal court into the room which he called *home.*

But after he had laid his little Nelly amongst the straw, and tenderly wrapped her in the old blanket that was their only covering, he heard the notes of a barrel-organ in the alley below. He still had a halfpenny in his pocket, and with one glance at the room full of sleeping children, one thought of the mother and father, who were still abroad, wasting life, and strength, and

money, he hurried down. The girls and boys of the court had subscribed a few pence for a little dance-music, and were jigging away in rough enough fashion to the unpolished airs. Tim slipped his coin into the old man's hand who presided at the orchestra, kissed the prettiest girl he could find unappropriated, and with much alacrity joined the young revellers. There were certainly far fewer objectionable elements here than in the crowded dancing-saloon. The strong drink that fired the pulses of the children there was wholly absent here; and they kept up the ball with spirit till a policeman's voice resounded through the court, angrily demanding what sort of a row they were making, when they all precipitately retreated, knowing well it was near midnight, and that if they did not accept the warning, they might get into trouble under the moon and stars at that *al fresco* dance. So Tim and the other gentlemen kissed their partners, but had no cloaks to throw over their shoulders, as in more fashionable society, and no carriages in which to escort them to their homes; but for real enjoyment and absence of heartache, perhaps the party might have favourably rivalled the most fashionable ball-room crowd in the London season.

And as Tim retires to rest for the night, he says to himself, "Och hone, but I've had a fair deal out of my sixpence, and marketed extramely well, shure; and haven't I had a pennorth of asthronomy, with all the stars quite close at hand, and the moon as bright and shining as silver; and haven't I bought a fourpenny-bit with a penny, though, the wicked spalpeen, I'd never go near the likes of him again, and I wasted a penny in

thrying to catch him once more. Ah, cushla, and what else have I had? Tim Maloney, it's meself that am thinking you've done well in marketing in the New Cut the night afther this fashion; for wasn't there hot chestnuts, and a loaf, and goodies, and litherature to make up the rest?—rading that I shan't get through wid for one while, I'm thinking; and a happorth of the dance music to finish with—a hop 'on the light fantastic toe,' a good many wid no covering to them at all at all;" and Tim laughed quietly with great satisfaction, and at last went to sleep just as the clock of a neighbouring church struck twelve, and the distant voice from Westminster also announced the midnight hour.

CHAPTER XI.

THE SHIP-LAUNCH.

"WHEN does the boy come to town, Christie?"

"On Monday."

"Then he will be here in time for the launch."

"Of course he will. I particularly wished him to be present at the ceremony."

"But the ship can't be ready for sea for a week or two after that."

"No; but he can help at the lading, and he will be getting at home in her; and he can come to the office too sometimes—I should like you to see a little of him. Unless I altogether mistake, he will be a splendid young man by-and-by. There is pluck in him, Knight, and self-sacrifice: and those are rare qualities in human beings now-a-days."

"Have they not always been so? Dear friend, is it not the chief beauty of our Master's life and teaching, that it taught moral courage and perfect self-denial for the good of others? We are all prepared to like your

Fred Coleridge. Geraldine is quite enthusiastic about him. She once drew a tragic picture of him on ship-board beside the captain, with the boat below just leaving them. Poor little Geraldine, she was desperately disappointed that I could not understand what it was all about!"

"What a bonnie child she grows," said Mr. Christie. "I fancy my Tom will have a beautiful wife, if he is a sensible fellow and makes sure of his opportunities."

"Wife! nay, Christie, you are joking. It is far too soon to talk of such things for my little Geraldine. She is not much more than eleven, is she? Well, I know she has not had her twelfth birth-day."

Mr. Christie laughed. "Knight, you are strangely anxious about the little maiden. Suppose her parents turn up and take her from you, what would you do then?"

Mr. Knight's face grew ashy pale. "God forbid," he said solemnly—"God forbid, in His good providence, that any one should take my child away. Surely they would not, Christie, after all my love and care of her. She is more mine than theirs. We will not talk of it. And now we must decide about the ship's name; for it is of no use to leave all till the last moment. What did Minnie say?"

"She wishes it to be *Geraldine*, and would like Geraldine's likeness for a figure-head."

"Very good," laughed Mr. Knight; "but Geraldine says it ought to be called the *Minnie Christie*."

"Bless me, what a funny Indian sort of name that sounds; a sort of first cousin to the 'Minniehaha' of

Longfellow's 'Hiawatha.' I should hardly own it as my child's name. Let us summon Geraldine, and see what she says."

Geraldine was practising music in the breakfast-parlour. Ann, who answered the bell, was sent to call her. She came bounding into the dining-room, where the gentlemen were seated over their wine. "Come here, puss," said Mr. Knight, putting his arm round her waist as she stood beside him: "the ship is to be christened next Tuesday; what shall you call it?"

"*I* call it! Am I to christen it, uncle?" and her face grew crimson with pleasure.

"Of course you are to."

"I thought it was to be *Minnie Christie*, uncle. That's what I wish, after *dear* Minnie."

"But Minnie wishes it to be *Geraldine*, and to have you for a figure-head."

Geraldine turned and looked into Mr. Knight's eyes, and laughed out merrily, "She'd never see me again if I were, uncle; would she? I should get beaten about so. But is it to be my namesake? How funny it would be for Geraldine to go to China to fetch tea;" and again her silvery laugh rang out joyously.

"Yes, it is to be *Geraldine*," said Mr. Christie. "And now, how are you going to manage the christening?"

"I don't know a bit, Mr. Christie; do tell me how it is done."

"Well, you must advance with dignified step, take a bottle of genuine port wine, poise it gracefully in your right hand, balance it carefully with your left, and then dash it against the side of the vessel, declaring in the

sweetest of tones that hereby you name the ship the *Geraldine*."

"Mr. Christie! Mr. Christie!" and Geraldine laughed again. "I *can't* do like that; that's like they put in the newspapers, isn't it, uncle? But how must I really do? And, uncle, I can't take port wine in my hand; would not water do?"

"Oh, you little bigot!" cried Mr. Christie; "can't you even *throw away* wine? That's a regular teetotal proceeding."

"No, sir; my pledge is against having anything to do with it. But why won't water do? We can name the ship with water as well as with wine."

Both gentlemen laughed heartily.

"They'll give you a premium at the Band of Hope for breaking down the 'drinking customs of society,'" said Mr. Christie when he had regained his breath. "You children do take up the thing with such a lot of earnestness and whole-heartedness. There was Minnie, the other day, Knight; we had the painters in the house, so she proposed that instead of giving them any beer, we should provide coffee for them, to prevent their feeling inclined to get more drink after they left; so they had a tremendous brew of coffee, and the whole house was smelling like a coffee-shop when I returned at night. I made a fuss, and Minnie said, quite innocently, 'Oh, pa, 'tisn't *nearly* as strong as your pipe at nights;' and they had the laugh against me. Children are wiser than their elders now-a-days."

Geraldine listened attentively, then she said, "May it be done with water, uncle?"

"I don't see why not, puss."

"Oh, thank you; that *will* be nice."

On Tuesday morning a carriage drove from Woburn Square, conveying Mr. and Miss Knight and Geraldine to the dock where the new ship had been built. She was a handsome little ship, gaily decorated now with flags, and the figure-head was a beautiful child, robed in blue and wreathed with flowers, her hair streaming over her shoulders—a somewhat rough but not unfaithful representation of our heroine.

On the wharf stood Mr. Christie with Minnie and Tom, and our young acquaintance, Fred Coleridge, now a year older and more than a year wiser than when we left him at Plymouth. His handsome face was bright and joyous with excitement, as he turned his eyes towards the advancing carriage on Mr. Christie's speaking to him. They were all at the door when it stopped. Mr. Knight alighted and handed out his sister and Geraldine. Presently a group of the clerks and warehousemen, amongst them Mr. Philp and Tim Maloney, appeared on the scene; Mrs. Philp and her daughters followed; a few other ladies, friends of the merchants or their clerks, and then a crowd of bystanders who had nothing else to do, gathered round to enjoy the pretty scene—these were gentlemen from the warehouses near, porters on the quays, merchants and shipbuilders. It was one of those beautiful mornings in February when spring seems to give an earnest of the loveliness she intends to fling with free and generous hand around the advancing year; and though there was little of nature in that London dock, with its busy sounds of labour, its ships in process of

building, its dull stony hue—little of nature in the muddy tint of old Father Thames sweeping onwards to the sea; yet the bright gold of the sunshine cast a beautiful, joyous gleam on all around, and rested lovingly on the small centre figure of the group, who stood on the deck of the fair, new ship. Geraldine wore a frock of white merino braided with blue—a Christmas gift on her last tree from Cornelia Knight; over it was fastened a loose scarlet cloak; and on her pretty head was a coquettish little black velvet hat, with a pure white feather, underneath which floated down her bright, wavy chestnut hair. Mr. Knight led her to the side of the vessel, while all the children watched her admiringly; Tim and Fred never took their eyes from the graceful young form till the bottle was broken, and the crystal water was pouring over the vessel's side, and the sweet voice had pronounced the ship's name *Geraldine;* then they pulled off their caps and joined in the glad chorus, "Hooray! hurrah!" that burst upon the air as the vessel, loosed from her moorings, glided like a water-bird on to her native element, and floated proudly on the sunny river. After the ceremony all the company sat round the tables arranged upon deck, whereon was spread a bountiful collation—cold meats, and tarts, and fruits, and tea and coffee, but no wine.

"If we begin the affair teetotally." Mr. Knight had said, "we will let the children have their way all through, and not have wine at the christening feast either."

There was much merriment at that festal board; few, if any, seemed to miss the usual intoxicating beverages; and many hearts were made very glad by the absence of

them. Amongst these we may especially mention Mr. Philp and Fred Coleridge, for the latter had been preparing his mind for much temptation, and much annoyance in the maintenance of his principles. He was somewhat home-sick on this festive day; he had never before left Plymouth and his parents' roof for more than a few hours, unless his father or brothers were with him on a fishing expedition; and all alone in the great city, knowing no one save Mr. Christie, a feeling of loneliness had encompassed him that was perfectly natural to his situation. In the fourteen months that had elapsed since the wreck of the *Linda*, he had been living a busy life: helping his father by day, and studying navigation at night, and reading useful books in all his spare hours.

"Geraldine, this is Fred Coleridge, your hero of the picture."

"Uncle Knight, for shame," said the little girl, blushing, but holding out her pretty hand to Fred, and glancing shyly into his dark eyes.

"This, Fred Coleridge, is Miss Geraldine Knight," continued the merchant, "after whom the ship is called, and whose likeness you take to sea with you on the figure-head."

Fred took Geraldine's offered hand, and in some confusion said respectfully, "Good morning, Miss Knight."

"Oh, I'm not Miss Knight!" said the child laughing. "That's Miss Knight," and she pointed to Cornelia. "I'm only Miss Geraldine; am I, uncle?—I wish you would tell me all about the *Linda*, Fred Coleridge."

"Will you come home with us, Fred, to spend the day?" asked Mr. Knight.

"I can't, thank you, sir, though I'm very much obliged to you. Mr. Christie has said I am to go with him to Putney."

Mr. Christie came up; the feast was over, and the company gradually dispersed. "You will all of you adjourn to Grove Villa now," he said. "Come, Geraldine," and he took her hand.

"Uncle, are you going?"

"I did not know I was, my child. Cornelia, what say you?"

"Herr Bertrand has promised to call on me to-day," she answered; "I can't make one of your party; but do you go."

"Then are you going home at once, Cornelia?"

"I must."

Mr. Knight led his sister to the carriage, placed her in it, and waved his hand to her, as she drove off.

Mr. Christie and his children, and Fred Coleridge, Mr. Knight and Geraldine, Mr. Philp and one of his sisters, started from the Docks to Waterloo Station, to take the train for Putney.

"Mr. Christie," said Geraldine, running to him, "might Tim go too? He looks very neat and nice to-day; and I do like him, and so does Minnie."

"Yes, yes; of course he may," said Mr. Christie. "Tim, come along with you; what are you moping there for?"

"Moping, yer honour?" said the Irish boy, running after them, his face now radiant with smiles; "it's meself that's not moping now thin, at all at all, but the gayest of the gay. Shure now, yer honour, when ye all went

off—the young ladies with their pretty smiling faces and kind words to poor Tim, and the gintlemen with their handsome clothes and all—it's not to be wondered at that Tim Maloney should feel forsaken, yer honour."

It was a happy party of children that commemorated the launch of the new ship *Geraldine* that afternoon, by joyous games and merry laughter. They played beside the Thames in the pleasant garden of Grove Villa, where the small crimson flowers of the hepatica, the sweet-scented hyacinths, and fair white snow-drops, with regal crocuses in gold and purple, were peeping from the rich brown mould, where but lately the pure white shining snow had lain, covering all things with its soft beauty. In their glad democracy of heart the young Christie boys made close companions of Fred and Tim, while their elders watched them from the windows, and rejoiced in their mirth. Just before the sun went down, in a glory of crimson and golden and purple clouds, they ended by a merry game of hare and hounds, wherein Tim proved himself so fleet of foot and agile of limb, that, as a hare, he evaded all pursuit, and as a hound caught every unfortunate hare that came even remotely in his way ; while gentle Minnie and joyous Geraldine walked together along the smooth paths, and watched the eager boys, their own fair young faces full of interest in the game, till they were all called in to tea by Mr. Philp.

CHAPTER XII.

FRED'S FIRST VOYAGE.

IT was not in human nature that Charles Seymour, formerly captain of the *Linda*, and now appointed captain of the *Geraldine*, should feel quite the same towards Fred Coleridge as he would have done towards an ordinary apprentice. The awful circumstances under which he became acquainted with the lad, the courage and heroism Fred had displayed in Plymouth Sound, and his modesty afterwards, had all made a deep impression on the skipper ; nor was this lessened by the recollection of the firm yet respectful and straightforward manner in which the lad had adhered to his temperance pledge amidst the storm and after much exertion and exhaustion. The *Geraldine*, to the intense delight of Minnie Christie and Geraldine, was to be conducted on temperance principles. Captain Seymour was not a teetotaller, "and never intended," so he said, to be one ; but he had no objection to his sailors doing without grog if they chose ; and the number of men requisite to form his crew—sixteen, all told—were

shipped without the difficulty he anticipated. The captain had a supply of rum and beer for himself in his own cabin, and the medicine-chest contained gin and a few bottles of old port; but there was to be no daily allowance of grog, and the sailors were allowed instead the full amount of the cost of the drink in addition to their ordinary wages. This arrangement gave great pleasure to Fred Coleridge. He saw from what an amount of temptation, and misery, and ridicule it would free him, and he wrote home to Plymouth a glowing account of his sailing prospects. With Captain Seymour he was a favourite at the outset, for the sake of old times; and everything promised well for his good progress as a navigator. It was on a bright fine day in March, cold and clear, with a tinge of frostiness in the air, a blue sky above them, and the sunlight sparkling over the Thames, that, good-byes being spoken, and kind wishes exchanged, Messrs. Knight and Christie, with Minnie and Geraldine, stepped off into the boat which had taken them alongside the *Geraldine*, and the beautiful little ship glided slowly away from the great city, past wharfs and quays, past warehouses and docks, past coal-barges and river-steamers, past Greenwich with its celebrated hospital and its fine old seamen, and Woolwich with its arsenal, and Tilbury Fort, and out into the broad mouth of the Thames, and then into the rolling waves of the Channel.

Five months of sailing, and touching at many ports by the way, and then—the shores of the Celestial Empire, the busy harbour of Canton, the polyglot language of the sailors on her quays, strolls inland amongst temples,

kiosks, and the country-houses and gardens of the merchants. How attractive all these experiences were to the young sailor: but, through all, the love of home and the kind friends he had left behind was strong within him; through all—on the rigging, with the strange stars above, in the clear calm sky, so grand and still—there was a lovely image in his young heart, of the sweet child with her floating sunny hair, and her bright face and silvery laughter, the darling, joyous Geraldine; and her frank parting words, as she shook hands with him on board her namesake, "Good-bye, Fred Coleridge," echoed in his heart like pleasant music.

Fred made good progress in his profession. Captain Seymour's wife did not accompany her husband on this voyage, for their second child was weakly, and needed skilful medical care, such as could not be obtained on ship-board; so, almost every evening the young apprentice passed with the skipper—reading useful books, working problems, practising the use of the compass, writing up the log at the captain's dictation, chatting, and playing chess. Fred made himself so popular on board with all the sailors, was so ready to oblige, and to take more than his fair share of the work, was so free from pride, so willing to learn of the old salts, that even this decided preference for his company, on the part of their captain, awoke no feelings of jealousy in their minds. With the exception of one man, they were all good friends to the lad. This man was called Harvey, and until he shipped on board the *Geraldine*, had been known as a "drunken lubber," and thought ill of by every tar who had chanced to make his acquaintance. All who knew him had

expressed their surprise that he, who loved drink so well, should go on board what was, to all intents and purposes, so far as the sailors were concerned, a temperance ship. Some thought he wished to amend his ways, others that the additional pay tempted him, and those who knew the man best decided that he would bring in his chest a surreptitious supply of rum.

"Captain," said Fred one day, when they had been afloat about a month,—"captain, does Harvey drink? Have you given him any *medicine?*"

The captain smiled. "No, Fred; he hasn't applied for any. What makes you ask?"

"He was fuddled to-day, captain, and did his work all wrong. Gray had to undo it again, or we should have sailed to the wrong point of the compass. Shall I take out the board? Are you inclined for a game, captain?"

"Yes, if you will, Fred. Let me know if you see Harvey in that state again. Where can the fellow have got it from?"

A few weeks later, soon after their rounding the Cape, Harvey reeled on the deck, and fell prostrate—hopelessly drunk, the other tars declared. Harvey himself, after lying in this state for a few hours, came to his senses, and said he had had a fit.

"Take care you don't allow yourself to have many more of the same kind," said Captain Seymour sternly; "or I shall be obliged to leave you to seek another vessel at Canton."

The man muttered something that sounded like a curse on the "young teetotal dog who had spied his actions and reported falsely."

Captain Seymour heard him, and talked to him severely. "If you are afraid of what Fred Coleridge may see and tell me, you have an easy way to get out of that difficulty, Harvey: never *do* anything you'd be ashamed to be seen doing. If you don't want to sail without grog, you should have boarded a different ship. If the money didn't make up for it, you were free to choose not to take it; but now that you have accepted the conditions, it's a cowardly sneaking piece of business to drink on the sly."

Harvey was cross and saucy. "It's all very well for you to talk, skipper; preach temperance on one side of your mouth, and take your grog on the other. I like to sail fair—captains and men alike, no favour."

"You were free to choose," said Captain Seymour. "I did not force you; I did not even ask you to sail under me. I shouldn't be likely to, knowing you were a bit of a soaker, and knowing the rules of this ship. I told you plainly the law that was laid down; and if you don't like it, you must lump it, or leave the *Geraldine*. I can't be unfair to my other lads. If the mate keeps his bargain, 'tis no greater hardship for you; that's all I have to say;" and Captain Seymour walked away, and down into his cabin.

"That fellow Harvey had me pretty tight to-day," he said to Fred that evening, as they placed their chess-men on the board. "I half wished my rum and beer at the bottom of the sea. I saw those bottles in my cupboard, and they tied my tongue."

Fred did not answer, save by a pleased, half-mischievous smile.

"You are glad of it, I suppose, you young rascal; you'd like me to be so uncomfortable about it, as to toss it all into the bottom of the sea?"

"Very much, captain."

"But I'm not going to, Fred, in a hurry; perhaps I never shall. I was always a stubborn sort of a temper, and it's not likely I shall alter my temper after I'm thirty years of age."

"Your move, captain." They were soon deep in their game.

Harvey's resentment to Fred did not end here, as may be supposed. He was always annoying the boy; trying his temper; putting difficulties in his way, and endangering his good character by spoiling his work for him; and though Fred's temper was remarkably sweet, and his nature took most things easily, yet now and then his passion was terribly aroused, and he said and did things which troubled his conscience for days and weeks afterwards. Another thing grieved him. All the men, with the exception of one old white-haired sailor, the boatswain, whom, on account of his piety, the others nicknamed "Methody Sam," were accustomed to swear in their talk, and Fred found himself, almost unconsciously, adopting their oaths and jests, till the admonitions of conscience, often despised or drowned, seemed to come less frequently and less sharply. One Sunday morning he was in the captain's cabin, after prayers had been read, and he turned over the leaves of the photograph album which the skipper had laid on his desk, for he had been gazing fondly at the wife and children at home, now thousands of miles away from him, across the deep blue sea.

"Anybody you know there, Fred?"

"Oh yes, captain; I should know Mrs. Seymour and Charlie anywhere. I suppose that's little Fan, isn't it?"

"Yes; turn over the leaf, and see who they are next."

"Why, that's Mr. Knight and Miss Geraldine."

Fred gazed in silence for a long time. Then Captain Seymour said, "Do you think it good? Her hair comes out too dark. She's a pretty fairy-like sort of a child. She's got the upper hand of him; but she's a good little soul, and not so much spoiled as you might expect. I think I've another of her somewhere; she gave me a couple when she had a lot taken. I'm a bit of a favourite with the little lady, through bringing her home little curiosities."

"Here's the other," said Fred. "Do you want both, captain? I wish you'd give one to me, or even lend me one."

"So," said the captain, laughing good-naturedly; "you're sweet upon her, are you, lad? You'd better not look so high; you'll have to come down from the clouds, I reckon. Mr. Knight won't let *anybody* have her."

"I don't mean to be *anybody*," said Fred promptly; and then coloured deeply, and added, "what is she to him—not a daughter, is she?"

"No; a niece, I think; but I fancy there's some sort of a story about her; I don't know what 'tis; however, he's adopted her as his own, and she'll have a tidy fortune by-and-by."

"I wish she hadn't a penny," said Fred, hotly.

"I don't expect Miss Geraldine would thank you for that wish; she's a dainty little lassie, and used to the

best of everything. I don't expect she'd like poverty for her portion. However, lad," added the captain kindly, "you may have the photo if you will; 'twill do you no harm to keep the thought of her in your heart. If it keeps you from the kind of life our lads too often lead on shore, you'll have reason to bless her, whatever may happen. I'm not one of those who believe sailor boys are not to be warned of the dangers ahead. I'd as soon let a fine vessel drift on to a rock without calling out, 'Ahoy there!' as I'd see you steering to the bad, or in any danger of it, and not pull your ropes tight and reverse your canvas. Your temperance pledge is a good thing for you, Fred, but you must not think that 'twill save you from everything; stick to it, don't be enticed to break it; and then — keep your eyes wide open, and ears too—that's my advice on every shore and in every port; and don't forget Miss Geraldine till you're older, and you've got some good girl to think about. I thank God," added the skipper, reverently, "that I knew and loved my Fanny before I was twenty; before I'd run riot more than a time or two; and though we could not marry for nearly five years, I had the thought of her prayers to keep me straight. She's as good a soul as ever breathed, Fred; and if every man would let himself be led in some things by a good, true-hearted woman, it would be the better for him. Temptations come to me now—I shouldn't be a man if they didn't; but they never get inside my heart. My love for her is so strong, that I do believe if I never got back to her all my life, I should still keep as constant to her as the needle to the pole. I know she's always thinking about me. But

what am I doing, Fred?—preaching a sermon to you this Sunday morning; it's out of my proper line, and I don't suppose you half understand me yet."

"I may not quite, captain," said Fred, respectfully; "but I like to hear you talk, and I'll mind what you say. I don't want to be a careless, loose, graceless fellow, like sailors often are—like I used to see them going on at Plymouth—but I do want to be like the good old sort of sailors, *brave* and *pure*."

"You couldn't find two better words for the motto of a tar; if they *were* that, Fred, they'd be the best missionaries afloat."

"Captain, there's one thing I want to speak to you about."

"Go ahead, my boy."

"I wish I did not take up to swear."

"That's on your conscience, is it, Fred?"

"Father hardly ever said an oath—he *must* be savage if he did," said Fred—"and he told me to keep from it if I could. But 'tis so difficult to help; and, when Harvey teases me, I know I often say bad words in what I answer him."

The captain looked grave. "I'm afraid you've come to the wrong one for advice on that head; yet, when Fanny's on board, I scarce ever utter an oath. You'd better ask old Sam; he knows more about good things than I do; 'tis a bad custom we sailors have. I'd rather speak clean myself, but I don't know how to break it."

"Will you reprove me whenever you hear me say a bad word, sir?"

"Then I must speak to myself too, Fred, or it'll be the grog business over again."

"No, captain, *I* shan't find fault with you, but be very much obliged to you."

"But I shall with myself. Why should I blame you for doing what I do?"

Fred laughed. "I'm younger than you, captain."

"All the more reason I should be wiser. No, no, Fred; you'd best speak to Sam. Ask him to correct you; and ask him how he keeps from oaths, and let me know what he says."

Fred and the old boatswain were already good friends when the young apprentice applied to him in his present difficulty.

"What shall I do, Sam, when I feel tempted to swear? I don't want to get into the habit."

The boy's earnest face, with its dark bright eyes, was fixed on that of the old man.

"Look up, Fred."

"Pray, you mean?"

"Yes; just look up; turn your heart heavenwards. You won't take the Lord's name in vain when He looks straight down at you."

"But I say it without thinking," said Fred; "the words are out before I mean them to be."

"Exactly. Then you don't feel that you are living in God's sight; you couldn't take His name and swear by it if you saw Him?"

"Indeed, I couldn't."

"That's all you've got to do, then; keep thinking all day long that He's *looking* and *listening*."

After this talk old Sam became Fred's counsellor in spiritual matters; and many a long and thoughtful conversation did the old and young Christian hold together on deck; many a yarn did they spin about the glories of heaven; many a hymn did they sing together on Sunday evenings; the old man especially delighted with the "Gospel Ship," which Fred had learned in his Plymouth Sunday school, and now taught to his friend.

At Canton, Harvey was dismissed, and a coloured man taken in his place—a simple, good-natured fellow, and an able seaman. The exchange was to Fred's advantage in every way. One day, walking in the environs with Watson, the other apprentice, and Isaac the negro, Fred gained a lesson in temperance, which was not lost upon him. There, crouched beside the low wall that bounded the outer courts of a temple, a wretched-looking being, in whom all the nobility of human nature had been eradicated by long use of the poison *opium*, pale, sunken, emaciated, he still grasped his long pipe in his shrivelled hand, and muttered a few words, that contained a doleful request for the means to refill it.

"Him poor slave ob opium," said Isaac; "him berry much want for pity; me find one little coin; me gib him one moment happiness."

"Don't do anything of the kind, Isaac," said Fred; "we'll get him some rice, that he mayn't starve; but he'll ruin his soul, as well as his body, if he takes any more opium."

"White man talk very high," said Isaac, showing his row of dazzling teeth. "In big white cities man drink gin, woman drink gin, pickaninny drink gin—

gin no hurt soul?" He shook his head unbelievingly. "Gin, opium, all same ting; make man sad, make man no flesh, make man lie down. Isaac, him nebber take gin, nebber take opium; him drink water, him drink coffee."

"Quite right, Isaac," said Fred; "you and I are the same sort, and Watson means to be too; we never take gin, never take rum, never take wine, never take beer; water is best—water, or tea, or coffee. It is dreadful to see this poor opium smoker; how bad he does look."

The long eyes of the Chinese had a sly expression as he watched them narrowly, and again pleaded for money. His dirty, neglected pigtail descended to the ground behind him, and his bare head was exposed to the glare of the hot sun. Fred could not bear the sight. He went back to the city, purchased some prepared rice, and a cup to hold water; he filled the latter, and carried both to the emaciated victim of an accursed appetite, but no gleam of satisfaction rewarded his pains: the celestial shook his head mournfully, and turned away from the offered viands. Fred set them on the ground beside him and went on with his companions. He had seen the same kind of thing many times even in Plymouth—drunkards, stupefied and hopeless and helpless, unable to aid themselves, and refusing offered assistance. If this happened in Christian England, why wonder at it in heathen China? And yet it made him very troubled; it made him feel how wide-spread was that demon of intemperance which tempts men to poison, and ruin, for the sake of a sensual indulgence—the bodies which God has given us to be the temples of the Holy Ghost.

Several months were passed in the different Chinese and Indian ports shipping their cargo of rice and tea, and they had been absent more than a year when they set sail homewards. A consignment of Indian cotton would take them to Liverpool before they again saw their homes and the dear ones they loved so well.

CHAPTER XIII.

LITTLE NELLY'S CLOAK.

WHILE the good ship *Geraldine* ploughed the watery main, or lay at anchor in many a beautiful bay on far-off shores, Tim Maloney continued to give great satisfaction to his kind employers. He was to be promoted to a junior clerkship at the very next opening, and he made all possible progress with his lessons, under the kind guidance of his friend and teacher, Mr. Philp. His wages had been raised once or twice, and if he had possessed sober parents, his home might have been a very happy one; and the money he would have added to the general stock would have been sufficient to buy him food and clothes, and increase the comfort of all. But the evil habits of Timothy and Ellen Maloney had taught their poor child a wisdom that, alas! is necessary for many children to learn even in the capital of the most Christian country in the world. He gave his mother, at first, half of his earnings weekly; but seeing that the greatest part of this sum went in gin, and not in food, and that the children

were often as hungry as ever, and he had to buy many of his own meals, he determined, when his wages were increased, not to give her any more, but to spend what he could, after the purchase of his clothes, in getting food for his little brothers and sisters. Little Nelly, his favourite, was growing up weakly and sickly, and her appetite often failed her. The coarse provision made by the mother it was impossible for the child to swallow, and Tim came to her rescue; he brought her little rolls of nice new bread, and cakes, and fruit to tempt the darling little sister, whose form he saw, with acute pain, was wasting and pining for lack of proper nourishment and good nursing. Now and then Tim expostulated with his mother; but, though not unkind nor violent, she seemed quite apathetical to all his remarks. "Things would never be different; it was no use to try to mend them; she must have her dhrop; she could not live widout it."

It was now the beginning of winter again. Many months had passed since the christening of the ship and the departure of Fred Coleridge from his native shores; and, with the bleak winds of November, Nelly's cheeks grew paler and her figure more slight and fragile. She always wanted to go with Tim to the weekly Band of Hope meeting in Candlemas Alley; and generally she went with him to school also, for kind Mr. Philp, pitying the little girl, arranged a little couch for her with some cushions on the form beside Tim, on which she might lie in comfort, and amuse herself with a picture-book or a slate. She was very grateful for all this kindness, and smiled with her wan lips, and thanked him in her gentle

voice; while the good teacher cursed anew in his heart the cruel drink-fiend that could make her wretched mother so neglectful of this weak, suffering little one.

One night it was very cold; a driving sleet made well-dressed men shiver and button their greatcoats up to their chins, as they hurried from city offices to their pleasant homes; cab-drivers growled on their seats as they waited for a job, and huddled themselves into as much shelter under their old waterproofs as possible; the very dogs seemed to dread the storm, and cowered under doorways and arches with a mournful, pitiful expression of countenance. Tim wrapped up the scantily-clothed child as well as he was able in an old, threadbare shawl, and took her out with him, for she would not be persuaded to stay behind; he hurried along as fast as he could with his heavy burden, and laid her on the little couch before Mr. Philp came in. With the bright gas-light and the pleasant fire near her, the child seemed to recover from the effects of the exposure to the storm, her pale cheeks grew less pallid, and she stretched out her little, cold hands into the glad warmth. Tim chafed them and the little feet, and hoped no harm would come of their adventure; but when he left the hall, two hours later, the storm was as pitiless as ever, and there was no bright fire to welcome them in their home. Nelly took a violent cold, and her hollow cough smote upon Tim's ears for many a night after. At last he went to a doctor, and brought him to the wretched room, promising to pay him for coming.

"What, have you a fortune, my boy?" asked the kind

surgeon, glancing at Tim, with a half-comical, half-pitiful expression.

"No, yer honour; but I airn me living, and it's not Tim Maloney that'll be backward in paying ye for yer care of the darlint little Nelly."

"She is very ill, Tim; where's your mother? She ought to be at home, nursing this child."

"She's at the whisky shop, yer honour."

"Will you be nurse, then?" said the doctor, sighing, and pointing to the scarlet spot on little Nelly's cheeks. "Can you get off your work and be nurse?"

"I daresay I might, yer honour, for I know another boy would take it perhaps for me."

"Stay, I have a better plan," said the doctor. "I know I can get her into the Children's Hospital; she will be much better taken care of there than here. However willing you are, it wants a woman to nurse her through this bronchitis. I must see your mother; do you know where to find her?"

"I'll thry, yer honour."

Tim brought his mother back with him; she was in a half-muddled condition, not drunk, but very far removed from sobriety. She gave her consent to the plan the doctor proposed, and, with no expression of concern, allowed the little invalid to be taken away to the hospital. Nelly rallied after a few weeks, and was carefully and tenderly cared for through her illness. Tim went every week to see her; once his mother accompanied him, but then she was dressed in borrowed clothes, which the neighbours were not very willing to lend,—her own decent garments had been pawned years before, and

never redeemed. Tim thought a great deal about his little sister, and he came to a resolve. "She must have a nice little waterproof cloak," he thought, "bran new from the dhraper's, and thin she won't be afther catching cold so soon." After school that evening he surprised Mr. Philp, by saying, "And how much money have I, yer honour?"

"You have nearly half a sovereign in the bank, Tim; and I have in hand four shillings since the last entry."

"Would that buy a waterproof cloak, bran new, yer honour?"

"What, for your mother, Tim?" said Mr. Philp, in astonishment.

"Oh no," and Tim shook his head; "no, no, yer honour—it's better she had a cold and was obliged to stay in the house—but for Nelly, now she's to come out of the hospital, yer honour; and she'll be ill again if I don't take care of her."

There was something touching in Tim's love for his little sister, and Mr. Philp's smile was sad as well as kindly, when he asked him, "And are you willing to spend all your savings, Tim, to get her a cloak?"

"Och, yer honour, and what's the use of the money at all at all, unless it's to do good with?"

"God bless you, Tim; that *is* the right use of all money."

There was a pause.

"Would you help me to go and buy it, yer honour? I'd have a little gray one with sleeves, like the ladies wear, and then Nelly can't catch cold."

Mr. Philp agreed they would make the purchase after

office hours on the morrow, and Nelly was to be dismissed from the hospital on the day following. Tim determined to wrap her in it himself and bring her home; he had some pleasant thoughts how pretty and warm it would make her look and feel. The shopping was done as proposed. The beautiful little cloak cost nine-and-sixpence of Tim's money; and there was not a gladder heart in all London than that of the Irish boy as he laid down the sum and caught up his precious parcel. Next day his dinner-hour was extended into leave of absence for the afternoon, and he went to the hospital for Nelly, the cloak on his arm, feeling the glowing warmth in his heart that arises from doing a kind act. He rang the bell at the gate, and was ushered into the ward where the convalescent little ones were at play. Nelly came running to him with a glad smile, and many of the others gathered round him. Tim was a favourite with children, he never repulsed them.

"Are you going to take Nelly home?" asked one little maiden, holding her doll on one arm and looking up into his face.

"Yes, Polly; don't you want her to go?"

"Not much; what have you got there?" touching the cloak.

"Something to wrap Nelly in; it's cold out in the streets."

The nurse came to him; she was a kind, easy-tempered young woman, with a laugh ever ready to break over her merry face.

"So you're come to fetch away my little Nelly?" she said, caressing the child. "Take good care of her, Tim.

for she's not very strong, even now; I should like to have kept her a bit longer, but that's not according to rule; is it Nelly?" and she caught the little girl in her arms and covered her with kisses. "Oh, I'm glad you've got a cloak, Tim; here, let's put it on and see how it looks. Why, *'tis* a handsome little cloak, anyhow, and quite new, too; did *you* buy it for her, Tim?"

Tim nodded. "That's a kind brother; if this child grows to be a woman, she'll owe her life to you. Bring her here again if she gets ill. Good-bye, my Nelly. There, doesn't she look nice?"

The kind hands pulled the cloak on to the little girl, buttoned it from top to bottom, kissed fondly the little cheeks that were still sadly too pale, and poured out all the while gentle words of love and lamentation at her departure. "There, my beauty; now, kiss Polly, and all the rest."

Nelly went round, with occasional glances of satisfaction at the buttons, and said "Good-bye" to her little friends; the nurse picked up a doll and a picture-book: "There, dear, they're yours; the lady said you should have them when you went away; come with me and say good-bye to matron." She caught Nelly in her arms and led her off. "Tim, you stay with the children a minute. I'll be back directly."

Tim stayed examining picture-books and toys which the little owners brought to him for approval.

"It's meself would just like to be one of ye, wid yer beautiful playthings, me darlints, and the lovely trees and sheep, and great pretty letters looking down from the walls upon ye, instead of running to and fro all over

London. Ah! cushla mavourneen, niver mind the knock, and lave crying to the little pigs," and Tim caught up a wee baby about eighteen months old, who had struck her head against a table, and hushed her in his arms.

Presently the nurse brought back Nelly. "Here she is, Tim; see, the matron has given her an orange and some cakes. Good-bye, my beauty."

Nelly's arms were thrown around the neck of the nurse, and she burst into tears, but she was soothed and comforted, and smiled again, as she put out her arms to Tim, who embraced her fondly, and then led her away, followed by shouts of farewell. They passed through the great gates, and were out in the world again.

"Where did Nelly get her cloak?" said Ellen Maloney that night, as Tim went out to the Band of Hope meeting, carrying her in his arms. The mother had not been at home when the child returned from the hospital, and the children had had a little feast with the good things the matron had given to Nelly.

"I got it for her, mother, that she might go out wid me at nights and not catch cold."

"'Twas a pity you wasted your money like that, Tim; if you'd bought us a shawl, anybody might have worn it that was afther wanting it the most, and 'twould cover the bed at nights."

"Yes, mother, but the cloak is for Nelly and nobody else. She's me little darlint, and I must be afther taking care of her."

"As ye will, Tim; ye'll spoil her intirely, that's all."

Tim had considered wisely that a shawl was far more likely to be pledged than the little cloak, and even where

the comfort of her sick child was concerned, Tim knew his mother too well to trust her.

Four weeks passed away, and Nelly and her little cloak were most regular attendants at the school and meetings. On Sundays they came again with Tim to Candlemas Alley, to be present at a children's service that had been set on foot in connection with the Band of Hope.

One night Tim came to school alone. Mr. Philp inquired for Nelly.

"She couldn't come, yer honour," he said shortly, but his eyes filled with tears. Tim worked desperately that night; puzzled his brain with hard sums, and put a superabundance of flourishes in his copy-book. But when school was over, and the boys had gradually dispersed, he still lingered; and as Mr. Philp locked his desk and put the key in his pocket, and the other teacher said "good-night" and went away, the Irish boy, with a pale determined face, drew near his kind friend, and said in a hollow voice,—

"Can I spake wid yer honour? I've a throuble."

"What's the matter, Tim?" asked Mr. Philp kindly, laying his hand on the boy's shoulder, and gazing into his careworn young face.

The gentle words and touch seemed to overpower the usually volatile Tim; he sat down on a bench, put his face in his hands, and sobbed bitterly.

"Come, come, Tim; you must tell me what is the matter, or I cannot help you."

"If it had been done to meself, yer honour, I'd have borne it, and not have been afther throubling you on the

mather," he said at last, raising his tearful face; "but it's the poor little darlint Nelly that I'm crying for. The mother has popped her little gray cloak, and dhrank the money, and she's got to stay at home in the cold and dark for the want of a covering."

Mr. Philp sighed. He had a large acquaintance with those stories of grief which strong drink brings before the notice of all who interest themselves in the poor; but this especially grieved him: the Irish boy's generosity to his little sister—his desire to benefit his family—his wish to learn and to advance in life, all seemed to be discouraged and almost paralyzed by the heartless conduct of his mother; in addition to this, was the cold-blooded cruelty to her invalid child—all these thoughts were in the mind of the good young man as he said kindly, "How did you find this out, Tim?"

Tim's face was flushed now, and there was an indignant sparkle in his blue eyes. "She can't hide much from me, yer honour; I saw her coming out from the pop-shop as I went home from the office, and when I came in Nelly was crying, and the mother was out dhrinking. 'What is it, mavourneen?' I said, though I knew all the while. 'O Tim,' said Nelly, 'shure mother's taken my beautiful cloak to the pop-shop, and I'll niver see it again;' and the tears ran down her little cheeks, Mr. Philp, and then I cried, and we sat and cried together; and she says, 'Tim, darlint, can't ye git it again for little Nelly?' and I says, 'I'll try, mavourneen.' But what can I do, yer honour? It's I that'll tell the mother and make her ashamed of herself the night, to stale the warm garmint from the sick child, and none of

hers either." And Tim looked, as he indeed was, very angry with his mother.

Mr. Philp walked once or twice up and down the hall without speaking; then he drew near Tim again,—

"It is manlike to be angry, Tim, but Godlike to forgive; let me come home with you and speak to your mother, will you?"

"She mayn't be at home the night, yer honour; she's got the money for the cloak, and she'll be off on the spree. O mother, mother; shure the mothers of the bastes and birds are kinder to the little ones than you."

Mr. Philp led Tim away to his dark and gloomy home. Do we often enough think what courage some of our Band of Hope children must have to determine to do rightly and to improve their minds in such wretched places as these—such drink infested haunts? Do we encourage them enough? When they reached the court, and stumbled up the dirty stairs, unillumined by any ray of light, they found, as Tim had expected, that the mother was still absent; the children were huddled together on the floor. Tim lit a candle and revealed the wretched bareness and misery of the place. Mr. Philp, as he could do no good, soon left, begging Tim to be quiet to his mother, and not quarrel with her. It was nearly midnight when the wretched woman returned, besotted and stupefied, to her poor children. All were asleep save Tim, and he pretended to be, in order to avoid talking about the cloak. Some good angel prompted her early the next morning, when she was sobered, to come and stand over the heap of straw; she bent down to look at little Nelly, who was lying folded

in Tim's arms, and as she did so, the boy heard her say: "And all the money's gone, and the little cloak he gave her; and it's meself that's a damon, instead of a mother; oh, cushla, and I niver thought to be the hardened wretch that I am when I was back in the ould counthry. Shure, it's the cursed dhrink that's a very divil to tempt me, and make me forget the children, and the house, and the ould love for Timothy Maloney."

The boy opened his eyes. "O mother," he said, and he started up—"mother, if you'll lave off the dhrink and be a good woman, I'll niver say a word about the little cloak again; will ye, mother, will ye thry?"

There was an earnest pleading tone in Tim's young voice. Ellen Maloney trembled visibly.

"Tim, I know I *can't* keep from the dhrink; curse it, it's no good to thry."

"Yes, it is, it is, mother mavourneen; och! don't say that ye will not thry! I've grieved sore about the darlint Nelly's little cloak, and she having to shiver wid the cold, and me savins nearly all gone; but oh, mother, if ye niver dhrink agin, it's meself that'll be happy. And perhaps we'll win the father, too, if the place is kept clane and nate, wid the light and the fire and the dish of praties to welcome him home; O mother, dear mother, *do* thry."

"Tim, I will," said poor Ellen Maloney, the tears starting into her eyes as she glanced at her children and the wretched room.

"Och! thin all will be well," cried Tim, hopefully. "I have a shillin' or two, and we'll have a faste to-night, and get the father to stay at home."

What a different world this would be if everybody kept their good resolutions!

Next day Ellen Maloney was reeling along the street, her righteous purposes forgotten, her promise to her much-enduring young son broken!

CHAPTER XIV.

GERALDINE'S PLEDGE-CARD.

"UNCLE, I have been a teetotaller a whole year, and yet I have done hardly anything teetotally."

Geraldine was alone with her uncle, Miss Knight having gone away for a few days on a visit. The dining-room in Woburn Square, with its rich dark crimson paper, its warm-hued curtains, also of crimson, looked especially cosy and comfortable in the bright firelight, as the child climbed into her uncle's lap, and rested her head upon his shoulder, for their after-dinner talk.

"Nothing teetotally! what do you mean, Geraldine?"

"Why, I've never done anything hardly to keep my pledge, except not drinking myself."

Mr. Knight laughed heartily. "Why, is not that the very reason you signed the pledge, to prevent the champagne bottles running away with you?"

The child smiled, and was silent a little, then she said: "Minnie has done a great deal, uncle; she has reclaimed one poor man, and made him sober and kind to his poor

little children. They had no mother living, and they used to dread him so;—mustn't it be *horrible* to have drunken parents? I should be *so* afraid of them, uncle. I am more afraid of a drunken man than of anything."

"How did Minnie accomplish all this?"

"Why, you know, uncle, the man lives at Putney, and she heard of him, and used to see him sometimes too when he was drunk, and she called and left a tract for him; and then she went again and saw him, and told him about teetotalism and asked him to sign the pledge. And he said he was very much surprised that anybody cared for him so much as to take the trouble to be sorry that he was a drunkard; and I don't exactly know *how*, Uncle Knight, but she kept on visiting him and being kind to him, till she got him to sign. And he has kept the pledge three months, and he says he means to try very hard to keep it always."

"That is good work, Geraldine. And so you want to be a temperance missionary as well as Minnie?"

"Isn't it greedy to keep a good thing all to ourselves, uncle?"

"What good thing, Geraldine?"

"Why, teetotalism, uncle."

Uncle Knight laughed again. "You dear unsophisticated little piece of goods," he said, "I am afraid none of us moderate drinkers will ever blame you for keeping your teetotalism to yourself."

"But, uncle, don't *you* think it nice to help people to be better?"

"*Very* nice, Geraldine."

"Don't teetotallers do that?"

Mr. Knight was silent, looking into the fire. How often children open up new views of duty for their elders by their simple questions.

"Besides about the poor drunkard," Geraldine went on, "Minnie has persuaded her mamma to take the pledge, though the doctor told her she could not do without wine, and yet she is better ever since; so I don't believe anybody really needs it."

"And doesn't Mrs. Christie ever take anything of the kind now?"

"Oh no, uncle, nothing; she is a capital teetotaller."

"And what am I, Geraldine? A capital drinker!"

Geraldine did not answer. "Wouldn't you be very rich, uncle, if you never drank any wine?"

"I am very comfortably off without emptying my wine-cellar, Geraldine."

The child laid her head back again upon Mr. Knight's shoulder, and her blue eyes gazed into the fire.

"What are you thinking about, little one?"

"About all the suffering, uncle, that strong drink makes, and wishing I knew better how to cure it—if I could *only* get you to help me, Uncle Knight."

"I, Geraldine! how could I help you? what could I do to lessen the misery? If I were to become an abstainer to-night, there would be just as many drunkards in the streets of London to-morrow. They will not leave off for my asking."

"There might not be as many next week, uncle."

"Where is your pledge-card, Geraldine? Did I not promise you a new and handsome one, framed and glazed,

to hang up in your room, if you kept the pledge for a year, and wished to continue to keep it?"

"Yes, uncle."

"Where can I get this sort of thing?"

"Mr. Philip will get it for you, uncle."

"Then we can tell him about it to-morrow."

"And do you think I may do more next year, uncle, to help on the Band of Hope, and to fulfil the promise I have made?"

"How do you wish to set about it, Geraldine?"

"I thought, uncle, if you would take me to a meeting sometimes: I should like to go where Mr. Philip and Tim go, in Candlemas Alley. I think I ought to show the other children that I want to help them to keep good."

"Is there a meeting to-night, Geraldine?"

"Yes, uncle, every week; this is their night."

"Would you like to turn out to-night from this pleasant fire and comfortable room? It is a low, wretched part of the City, dear child; perhaps I hardly ought to take you into it. I don't know what Aunt Cornelia would say."

"Will you really go with me, uncle—oh, that is kind!"

Geraldine bounded from the room. She returned very soon, attired in her walking dress. Mr. Knight stopped her as she danced about the room: "Geraldine dear, if you think you will enjoy the meeting to-night I fear you are mistaken. The children will be dirty, noisy, disagreeable; the room hot and stifling, the neighbourhood bad, there will only be Tim and Mr. Philip who will be at all

pleasant to look at. But we will see about your pledge-card; he may have some with him."

So they set out. Mr. Knight hailed a passing 'bus, which took them into the City; then they went into another, and that set them down very near Candlemas Alley. They groped along the narrow dark street, till they heard some rather noisy but not discordant singing, and saw a bright light from two large windows. There was not the faintest trace in the dingy alley of the beauty of spring. The winter had been unusually mild, and a few miles away trees were budding, and the earth was awakening from her sleep; here, save for the longer daylight and the softer air—welcome, indeed, to the poor who were destitute of coals, and wood, and candles—there was no proof whatever of the changing seasons.

And now they have entered the hall amongst the crowd of young eager faces, who with wide open mouths are still singing heartily, Mr. Philp leading their song with his voice, and playing on his concertina. As he sees Mr. Knight and Geraldine he stops, walks down from the platform, and finds a comfortable seat for them on it, facing the children. "O uncle," whispers Geraldine, "see what lovely snowdrops!"

On the little table beside which Mr. Philp stands is a large bowl, filled with the dark green leaves of box, and hundreds of the beautiful little white flowers, speaking in gentlest and sweetest of voices a lesson of purity and love to the children. All eyes are fixed upon little Geraldine as she sits beside the flowers, looking, with her bright blooming face, like a fair blush rose. She looked quite as earnestly at the children, and soon espied Tim

and little Nelly, who occupy a seat in the front row. She nodded to them good-temperedly, whereat Tim saluted her gravely and respectfully, and little Nelly smiled.

"That's Tim's little sister, uncle; isn't she a pretty little child?" Geraldine whispered again.

"Very, dear." Mr. Knight glanced a second time at the fragile little form, the pale, delicately-chiselled features, and the dark blue eyes. If Geraldine is the blush rose, Nelly is assuredly the snowdrop of that child-company.

The meeting goes on; Mr. Philp invites Mr. Knight to speak to the children. He refuses at first, then Geraldine whispers "Do!" and for the first time in his life the merchant steps on to a temperance platform. He feels a difficulty at the first moment; he can't tell them he is a teetotaller; he can't link his prosperous life to their sad struggling ones, and help them by oneness of purpose and interest. "Why not?" said his good angel; "why not? You who love your divine Master, you who love His little ones, is it hard to make a sacrifice for their sakes? Is it not worth while to remove a stumbling-block out of the way of the least of these? and if you do it, will it not be done unto Him, and accepted by Him?"

It only took a minute or two to think all these thoughts; but Geraldine was never so surprised in her life as when her uncle got up and uttered these words, "My dear children, I am come here to sign the pledge!"

"Hooray!" shouted Tim joyfully, and the other children echoed him.

"And to tell you that I will do all in my power to

help you to get rid of strong drink, it curses your homes; there is hardly a child here but would be better clothed, better fed, better taught, if father or mother gave up the drink."

"That's thrue, yer honour!" cried Tim parenthetically.

"And if you never touch the drink yourselves, you may one day be respectable men and women, honoured and loved by those around you. I am very glad to see so many of you here. I have come with my little Band of Hope niece to wish you all kind things; to tell you how sorry we are for you, when you are hungry, and cold, and beaten about; how we wish you to try and become good boys and girls, loving Jesus the children's Friend, trying hard to do His will." He paused, and then added: "Now, children, see me sign my name, and be my witnesses."

They all gazed eagerly, as he took the pen in his hand, and, with a few playful flourishes, signed his name on the card Mr. Philp had handed him: then he held it aloft in view of the amused children, and received a very hearty welcome from them into the ranks of abstainers.

"Thank you, thank you, dear children," he said, as they calmed down again into silence; "and now let me invite you all to tea with us here, in this hall, in honour of this event, and also of my niece s having been a Band of Hope girl for a whole twelvemonth. Who'll come?"

"All!" they shouted at the top of their voices, and cheered and stamped again vociferously.

Mr. Knight talked in a low tone to Mr. Philp, and

then gave notice that the tea would be held on the Tuesday of the following week.

"Any of you," said Mr. Philp, standing beside Mr. Knight, "that can HONESTLY get a few flowers or evergreens, will please bring or send them to me the night before. Now, boys and girls." They all bent forward quietly and reverently, while a simple prayer was offered for them by Mr. Philp. At the close of the meeting each boy and girl walked past the platform and received a flower or two.

"You have to thank Tim Maloney for these snowdrops," said Mr. Philp: "he got up at an hour before it is light, when most boys are in their beds, and walked miles into the country before office hours. Do you not thank him for them?"

"Three cheers for our Tim," cried one tall boy, and they all cheered lustily.

Tim coloured, laughed, and nodded his shock of red hair. "Arrah now, but ye're as welcome as the sun in the morning."

The bowl, full though it had been, was soon empty, and it was affecting to see the loving glances which the children cast upon the fair little flowerets; the boys mostly stuck them in their button-holes, the girls carried them between their fingers. Little Nelly took her's and kissed each snowy petal, and whispered, "Dear little flowers."

"She's so fond of flowers, the darlint, she goes wild over them; don't you, mavourneen?" said Tim half apologetically, as he passed Mr. Knight and Geraldine; and as he did so, he shyly placed his own snowdrops into the hand of the little lady.

"Oh, thank you, Tim, so much," she said, looking down in delight at her treasure.

"Stop a little, Tim," said his employer kindly; "I shall want your services for next Tuesday night. You must be head-waiter at the tea."

"Yer honour's laughing at me," said Tim; "I niver carried a tray in all me born days."

"You must be here to do whatever Mr. Philp wants, Tim."

"It's I that'll be proud to do that, yer honour."

"Good night, my boy; here, get something for the little girl." He slipped half-a-crown into the boy's hand. Geraldine was talking to Nelly, she kissed the fair white cheeks as they parted, and shook hands with Tim; "She is *such* a dear little girl, uncle."

Then there was the pledge-card business to settle. Mr. Philp promised to procure the very best he could find for Geraldine; and a week later he brought it to Woburn Square, glittering with gold and crimson, in a beautifully ornamented gilt frame. This card Geraldine had hung in her pretty bed-room, between treasured likenesses of Uncle and Aunt Knight.

The night they attended the meeting in Candlemas Alley, as they drove home in a cab, Geraldine pressed Mr. Knight's hand and whispered, "Thank you *so* much, uncle."

"What for, little one?"

"For signing the pledge; now I have you on *my* side."

"I hope, dearest child, you have me on the side of *truth*," he answered, and then he was very silent, and

only spoke a few words, and they were thoughtful, serious ones, at their supper; in the prayer that followed he asked for the first time in his life for a blessing on the Temperance cause, and when they arose from their knees he kissed Geraldine tenderly, and dismissed her with Ann.

And when he was quite alone, the servants all in bed, and the house quiet, he sat down again in his easy-chair by the fire and meditated long and earnestly. "How little I have done," he thought, "with all my money and ability, for the poor and the friendless around; what a lesson Philp has taught me; poor comparatively as he is, a stranger in the great city, he has thrown himself into the work with noble zeal. Oh, for more such self-devotion, more denying of self, more willingness to adopt any line of conduct, however despised by others, that may benefit our own moral nature, and make us more useful to our fellows."

Thus he reflected, till the fire was very low, the air grew chill, and he turned at last from the comfortable room full of plans of usefulness, and thankful that he had had the courage to strike into a new path of service for his God.

CHAPTER XV.

ON SHORE AGAIN.

THE good ship *Geraldine* put in at Liverpool, as we have said, on her return. The next evening Fred and the other apprentice, Watson, gladly left her side to tread once more the shores of Old England, and feel themselves at home again. How strange it all looked and felt to them, now that their eyes were so accustomed to the minarets, and cupolas, and domes, and groves of luxurious Eastern cities! And when they stepped from the boat, they were at once surrounded by the greedy men who had already crowded their ship the night before in boats with surreptitious supplies of drink and offers of money and goods; there were other temptations, too, not so manifest, but more dangerous still. Just as the lads turned out of one of the narrow streets that led to the docks, a girl met them with eager looks and sparkling eyes. "Are you from the *Geraldine?*" she asked breathlessly.

"Yes," they both answered.

"Oh, I'm so glad; you can tell me if my brother.

Ned Moore, is on board or on shore. He promised to come off at once, if possible."

"Ned Moore? why, he left us at Bombay," said Watson, in surprise, "and shipped to the *Pearl*, that was to be here before us."

The girl opened her eyes very widely indeed. "You don't say so? Well, that is strange. Do come home, and tell my mother about it, will you?"

Fred glanced at Watson, and whispered, "Had we best go?"

"Come on, do," she said pleasantly. "Mother will want to know all about it. She's dreadfully fond of Ned."

The lads followed her. It seemed only kind to do as she had asked; and yet Fred was a little puzzled—only a little though. Should he like any other tar to refuse to tell his sister Mary about him? Of course not. The girl was tidy and respectable, and was leading them to a neat-looking house; and after ascending one staircase, she opened a door and ushered them in. An elderly woman and another girl were seated at work beside a table. "Mother, these young men are from the *Geraldine*, and they say Ned has left her and joined the crew of the *Pearl*. Isn't he a regular scamp not to write and tell us about it? I brought them in to see you. Ned had two good-looking shipmates anyhow, hadn't he?" and she laughed.

"You'll stay and have a cup of tea with us, and tell me all about my boy?" said the elderly woman in a quiet, agreeable tone.

"You're very kind, missis," said Watson; "and we'll

stay if you'll let us, on one condition—and thank you kindly—and that is, that miss here lets me give her a trifle to supply cake and things in general. I'm not too proud to take a cup of tea; but I'm very hungry, and should frighten you, maybe, if you saw me eat. You're not offended, I hope?"

Watson spoke with a sailor-like jollity and jaunty air, and the young woman thanked him and took the offered half-sovereign, and went out. She came back with cakes and fruit, a bottle of beer and another of rum, and laid them before him, with the change, four and sixpence.

"Well, I'm not much of a hand for this sort of thing," said the young sailor, as he lifted the bottles from the table; "and as for my friend here, he's a teetotaller—a regular Band of Hoper—won't drink in any weather, fair or foul, or in any country, east or west."

The elderly woman frowned. Fred saw it, and it made him suspicious; and more so still when she turned to him with a hypocritical smile and said graciously,—

"We shall all respect you the more, young man. Rum is the ruin of many as fine a tar as ever rode over salt water. Now, shall we have our tea?"

The girls had arranged cups, dishes, and plates, and one of them—the same who had met them, and whom her mother called Harriet—cut the cakes and uncorked the bottles, and then sat down beside Watson, her sister taking the chair next to Fred Coleridge. Watson was in high good-humour, and laughed and chatted gaily with his companion. Fred spoke little; he was unhappy, and wished himself away. Watson was the creature of

the moment; gay, light-hearted, and trustful, the very nature to become the victim of the artful and designing. But as tea went on, Fred, whose nature was as frank and open, though more cautious than Watson's, also relaxed; his smile grew more frequent, his laugh more hearty, and he became as animated as his companion in talk about the wonderful things they had seen and the strange places at which the *Geraldine* had touched.

Then Harriet poured some rum into Watson's tea, as he sat beside her, and he laughed, and expostulated, and finally drank it, to Fred's sorrowful surprise.

"Watson, I thought you promised me to sign the pledge?"

"So I did, Fred; but I haven't done it yet. I'll have one more taste before my name is down."

"You'll be a foolish fellow if you sign to anything of that kind," said the mother; "you can drink as little as you like without making a fool of yourself. Come, come, young man, you'd better take a drop too; we won't peach on you, and nobody knows you in Liverpool."

"I know myself, don't I, ma'am?" said Fred, hotly. "Do you suppose I do mean things in my own presence?"

"You need not be violent. I was only advising a little rum for your good," she replied, seeing how matters stood, and wishing to conciliate him. "We won't talk of it again, if it vexes you so; I did not mean any harm. —Well, girls, where are you going to take your friends to-night? There's an Ethiopian serenading party not far off; but I reckon they've had enough of blackamoors, and would think it more of a treat to see white folk.

You might go and see 'Colleen Bawn;' I know you'd all enjoy that—'tis a beautiful play."

"We must make haste then," said Harriet, jumping up; but she poured more rum into Watson's cup before she retreated.

"Don't drink it, Watson;" said Fred; "you've had enough."

"All right, my boy; I haven't to climb the rigging to-night," and he poured it down his throat. "Now, then, I'm ready for anything, missis, from a dance to a fight;" and he brandished his arms and commenced a hornpipe.

"Girls! girls!" shouted the woman, "come along, quick; he's a capital dancer: just look at his legs. My word, but I never saw a hornpipe better danced, and he's not the first sailor I've seen try it by some dozens. He would enjoy Blake's; you'd better go there after the theatre. Dancing's in your line, I see, and my Harriet has a beautiful step. I had her learn of an old fellow that lived along this row. She knows it, and will be your partner."

"All right," cried Watson excitedly, kissing Harriet before they went out, and telling Fred he ought to be ashamed of himself not to salute his partner, after not seeing an English girl for over a year; whereat Nanny pretended to run away from Fred, for fear he should—a very unnecessary proceeding, if she could have looked into his heart, where a fair young form was mirrored, whose spotless purity made him more than half ashamed of his present position, and placed a barrier for ever, young as he was, between him and all other maidens' lips.

They were out into the street now, and pacing rather rapidly along. Watson rollicking and joking with Harriet, Fred following demurely enough with Nanny.

Into the pit of the theatre, amongst bright lights and gay laughter, in view of fair faces, and opposite a curtained stage; presently the curtain drew up, and Fred, as well as his companions, was interested at once. He followed the Irish heroine through the scenes of her strange history, and all the more eagerly because of a likeness in her to Geraldine—the same rich mass of warm-hued hair, the same bright colour in the blue eyes; and the low musical voice of the young actress sent a thrill of joy to his heart—it was almost like hearing Geraldine. So the two hours passed all too quickly for him, and he was sorry to find himself away from the theatre, following his companions along crowded streets. Presently Watson paid away some more money, and they were inside another door.

"What is it?" Fred asked: but no one answered.

A band played dance music in an adjoining hall: and Harriet and Nanny, after absenting themselves for a few minutes, returned in low dresses, with flowers in their hair, and claimed their partners.

"Is this a dancing-saloon?" cried Fred Coleridge, in amazement. "Watson, don't stay; they are horrid places. I am off at once; come along with me, mate."

Watson looked at him: his eyes were wild and his manner excited. "Go with you! not if I know it. I'm in for a night's frolic now, and why not?

"'There was never a sailor but loved a pretty maid,
When afar from the land he had been.'"

And he caught Harriet and kissed her, and led her into the adjoining hall. As the door opened, Fred saw a blaze of light, a rush of quickly whirling forms, and immediately turned to go out at the main doorway. He felt the temptation natural to a young sailor at that sight. He did not blame Watson; he knew that the temperance pledge alone stood between him and an entrance into that hot-bed of temptation; he felt that if his blood had circulated as wildly through his veins as Watson's did since he had imbibed the poison—rum—he should have acted precisely as he had done; have lost his self-respect, and not have dared to think again of little Geraldine.

"You are not going to leave me, Fred Coleridge?" said a complaining voice beside him.

"I will take you home to your mother's, if you like. I will not go in there," Fred answered.

"Come, there's no harm in it," said Nanny. "Do you mean to say that Harriet and I would do it if there was?" she added, indignantly. "What do you mean to insinuate? Come; you don't want to quarrel; let's go in."

"No, thank you; never." He turned from her, and was out into the street again. How glad he felt, as he looked up at the blue sky above, and the bright stars, that he had not yielded. Never before had sin fascinated him so much. He gave himself up to thoughts of his home at Plymouth, of the virtuous parents who had reared him, the innocent sisters he loved; the temperance meetings, at one of which he had signed the pledge—that Band of Hope pledge-card that he had kept so faithfully; and the Sunday-school where he had heard such won-

drous stories of God's love to man. He paced up and down before the dancing-saloon waiting for Watson An hour passed away; the policeman on his beat noticed him.

"What are you waiting for, young man?" he asked at length, civilly enough.

"I am waiting for a friend of mine who has gone in there," and Fred pointed to the saloon.

"Alone?" queried the policeman.

"No."

"With girls?"

"Yes."

"Then it's no use your waiting here I should advise you to go home. Where do you lodge to-night?"

"I mean to go to the Sailor's Home."

"The very best place. They won't be shut up yet: they give the fellows every chance they can. But you had best make haste. Is your friend in liquor?"

"He's had a drop of rum."

"What a set you sailors are for drink," said the policeman. "But *you* know when you've had enough."

"I think none is enough, and never take any," said Fred.

"Oh, teetotal!" smiled the policeman.

"Yes, teetotal," Fred answered, also smiling. "But I say, policeman, I don't like leaving my mate. How shall I find him again? and how will he get back to our ship in the morning? He'll be ashamed to come alone, if he's been on the spree."

"You don't happen to know where these girls came from that he's with, do you?"

"Yes;" and Fred told him all.

"Oh, he'll go there to-night, without doubt. If you wait, he will only be cross and troublesome."

"But we're just like brothers," said Fred; "and I don't want him to get into any scrape with Captain Seymour; and we've to be back in good time to-morrow; 'twas foolish of us to come ashore. Watson's been diddled out of a good bit of money already."

"If you'd been brothers in teetotalism this wouldn't have happened; though there are some fellows that call themselves teetotal that go in there—but they're not very genuine, I reckon; 'tisn't fair to count them."

Fred was silent, the knowledge of the strength of his own temptation to enter humbled him. At this moment the door of the building opened, and Watson and Harriet, arm in arm, tumbled in tipsy fashion over the two or three steps that led to the pavement.

"That's my mate; can't we save him from robbery and disgrace?"

"I don't think he'll let us," said the policeman. "Hullo, you, Jack; here, isn't it time to get on board again?"

"What's that to you?" drawled Watson, and the girl laughed.

"You've no right to interfere with my friends, bobby," she said; "call a cab, will you, and tell him to drive us home."

"You may call your own cabs, hussy," said the policeman, "and not expect an honest man to do your bidding. Let this young fellow go; his friend is waiting for him, to see him to his proper lodgings. Go home alone."

"I shan't," said the girl; then turning to Watson, she whispered something in his ear. The young sailor roused himself, and declared passionately he would never leave her; that his friend was a sneak and a spy, a mean dog, to watch his actions, and he would never sail in the same ship with him again. Then he laid his arms around her in a drunken, senseless, unmeaning way, and hiccupped out endearing words, which mocked faithful affection so horribly, that it might have made an angel weep; nor would such tears have been dried at the woman's hypocrisy with which she coaxed away her young unsuspecting victim, away from virtue and honest friendship to the "gates of hell" and the false caresses of his destroyer.

Fred pleaded with Watson, but all in vain; the infatuated lad resisted every effort.

"One thing I know," said Fred to the girl, in a firm voice, "you cannot rob him without my knowledge. I counted the money into his purse this afternoon, and will tell this policeman here how much he had, that I may take proceedings against you if you steal anything."

Harriet laughed grimly. "The money's his own; he may *give* away what he chooses, mayn't he? Don't you be so sharp, young man; this isn't the first sailor I've had in tow by many a one. Look after yourself, you spotless fool;" and she swore at Fred, as she dragged the tipsy Watson towards a cab-stand.

"None of that," said the policeman, "or I'll take you in charge."

She was gone. With some difficulty the sailor was

seated in the vehicle; Harriet took her place beside him, and they drove off.

Fred's heart was sick and faint within him. "Good-night," he said sorrowfully to the policeman.

"Don't take on so, young man; you're not much used to this sort of thing, or it wouldn't make you so miserable."

"'Tis horrible; worse in Christian England than in any of the foreign ports that we have touched at."

"We have the drink, lad; it makes everything of this kind a thousand times worse. Good-night."

Fred hurried away. On shore again!—he had looked forward to it after his long voyage with so much pleasure, and this first night on English soil had been one of the unhappiest of his life. It had ruined his friendship for his young mate. Watson could never be very much to him now; all his good resolves had been broken; his promise to take the pledge forgotten; his character soiled; his purity marred. Would there *never* be a race of heroic, enterprising, virtuous sailors, such as he had pictured in his boyhood, and such as he had fondly hoped Watson and himself would become? And the answer was: NEVER, while strong drink aids every harpy, male and female, to beguile the luckless tars to their ruin; NEVER, while the lawgivers of Christian England neglect to find means to save from the deadly pollution of a drink-poisoned atmosphere the very class of men who, from their open-handed, lavish generosity, most need the protection of the law.

Next morning, Fred returned to the *Geraldine*. Captain Seymour was angry, though not surprised, at Watson's

protracted absence. On the third morning, after much anxiety had been felt for him by all his shipmates, the lad made his appearance. He looked pale, haggard, dissolute, neglected; his money was gone, his mind remorseful, his head racked with pain. Grossly adulterated drinks had been freely administered to him; and, too late, he cursed the folly which had made him turn a deaf ear to his faithful friend. There was no use in reproaches now; but Fred warned him, he had better sign the pledge at once, and repent of his sin ere it was too late, and resolve not to go on shore again till they were out of the Mersey, and he found himself once more in his own home.

CHAPTER XVI.

IN THE GREENWOOD.

FRED returned from his first voyage in the *Geraldine* late in the autumn. After spending a month or two at Plymouth with his family, he left again in December, for a short cruise with Captain Seymour to the Levant, from which they got back at the end of May, just as England wore her fairest robes of loveliest green, and all Nature was rejoicing in her new-found freedom from the icy chains of old and hoary Winter.

More than a year had passed since Mr. Knight had signed the pledge in Candlemas Alley, and ever since he had been a faithful friend to the cause he then adopted as his own. The whole of the considerable sum he had expended on intoxicating liquors was devoted to the spread of temperance principles. Mr. Philp was never stopped in his efforts by a want of funds; and Mr. Waterhouse, to whom Mr. Knight had been introduced, became a frequent visitor at Woburn Square, and dispensed the bounty of the merchant judiciously and carefully. It is

astonishing how much good can be done with forty or fifty pounds a-year, expended wisely in the temperance movement.

One of those gloriously sunny spring mornings, when life bounds afresh in the pulses of every living creature who does not altogether debase and pollute the energies God has given, and when the dull atmosphere of the counting-house seems peculiarly burdensome to the human animals pent therein, Mr. Knight called Mr. Philp into his private room, and said, "Sit down, Philp. I've been thinking of your youngsters in Candlemas Alley; suppose we give them an outing for once, and let them run wild in Richmond Park; do you think they would like it?"

Mr. Philp's eyes were sparkling with pleasure, but he said, "You have done so much, Mr. Knight, and it would cost quite a considerable sum."

"More than a year's account with my wine-merchant in former times, Philp?"

"No, sir, I shouldn't expect more; but I don't know."

"If anything under thirty pounds will do it handsomely, you are at liberty to draw upon me to that extent."

"Much less would give them an afternoon there, and a tea, sir."

"Oh, I don't mean that; let them have a whole day, and provide some sort of dinner for them, if it's only bread and cheese."

"Should we take them by train or in waggons, sir?"

"Whichever they like best. I think we might get waggons cheaper, and give them the difference in better

food. Two of our own might be spared; and I have not the least doubt that Franklin and Wallis would lend us three or four of theirs; 'twould be almost more fun to the boys—they might have a turn at driving; they are not like country children, to whom it would be the greater treat probably to go in a railway-train."

"Very good, sir; and when shall it come off?"

"While this bright weather lasts; as soon as ever you can arrange it—the money is ready and waiting. And now that Fred is back, he would enjoy going with us before he sails again; and the *Geraldine* will put to sea next month for China."

So the arrangements were made with all haste, and a number of young hearts in Candlemas Alley were set bounding with delight by the announcement Mr. Philp had to make to them. It was not surprising, perhaps, that the school and the Band of Hope considerably augmented in numbers for the few days before the treat. All who had ever been on the books, and who had for some while neglected to attend, put in an appearance in wonderfully quick time—however remote their present residences might be from the alley; and Mr. Knight would not be harsh even on the young truants. Only quite new boys and girls, whose names were unknown to Mr. Philp, and foreign to the registers of past years, were excluded. And so it happened that there were above five hundred children who received little pink tickets, entitling them to be taken to Richmond Park on the 30th of May.

In this excursion Tim was the life and soul of the party, entering into all the sports with a heartiness that

could not be equalled; and tender and gentle as ever to the very little ones, and to the weak and ailing children. You might have seen the active boy bearing along on his back some crippled child, or weary baby of a few years, whose little legs refused to totter very far; and making so little of all his kind acts, that every one accepted them almost as a matter of course. Tim was now more than fifteen; tall, athletic in figure, and much improved in personal appearance. His red wavy hair was neatly arranged; his kindly humorous face was fair and clean as soap and water could keep it in dingy London; his dress, if poor, was scrupulously neat; and his smile was as sweet as ever.

In all temperance matters he was Mr. Philp's right hand. At the office his position had improved—a junior clerkship had been given to him—and he was trusted by the firm and by the other clerks implicitly. But at home—poor Tim!—life was still a troublous ocean on which to steer his little bark. Ellen Maloney's degradation had grown more and more complete. For this day, however, Tim and little delicate Nelly had cast aside all thoughts of care and sorrow.

Six waggons full of children drove off from the hall in Candlemas Alley amidst much shouting, and merriment, and gathering of ill-clad women, whose poor faces for once were lighted with a glad thought of their children's pleasure. The rest of the little ones—between two and three hundred in number—were marched to the station; while on the return journey, those who had come by train would be deposited in the waggons, and the occupants of the waggons would ride in the train. This arrangement gave unbounded satisfaction.

Mr. and Miss Knight, with Geraldine, Fred Coleridge, Mr. Waterhouse, and the Christies, accompanied the party in the railway-carriages, aided, of course, by a large staff of teachers and friends. Mr. Philp and his sisters, Tim Maloney and little Nelly, went in the waggons. The railway party were first on the field; and Mr. Knight could never forget the glad words of surprise that escaped the children's lips as they roamed, free and unrestrained, amongst the lovely glades, the shady avenues, the magnificent trees of the beautiful park.

And when the waggons drove upon the ground about an hour later, and greetings took place between the children, and loud huzzas from glad young throats went up heavenwards, there was a feeling of grateful praise in Mr. Knight's heart that money spent selfishly can never bring.

In passing, let us strongly recommend rich merchants who are looking out for fresh investments, to take a share in such a concern as this of Mr. Knight's. They will find it pays a marvellous interest. cent per cent at least; and there is no fear whatever that the principal will be lost. Better than hoarding masses of wealth for young heirs and heiresses; better than buying shares in banks and companies which may prove rotten; better than wasting money on selfish enjoyments, opera-boxes, and hunters, and racers, and cards, is it to open one's treasury for the poor, the neglected little ones of dear old England. Take out a few hundreds of the city Arabs some bright, warm summer's day into the lovely country around London, and if you have any heart, they will present you in quick succession with farce and panto-

mime more wonderful than the best actors can produce. Or take a batch of untaught country children, fresh from heath and moorland, and show to them the wondrous sights of the great metropolis, and you will reap a rich harvest of delight from their bright wondering eyes, their drolly-gaping mouths, and the quaint remarks they shall make, for many and many a day afterwards.

Little Nelly Maloney was in perfect ecstasies of delight. "Tim, Tim," she cried, as she sat in a little dell where there nodded around her, in beautiful luxuriance, hundreds of bright bluebells standing amongst the ferns, with which she filled her small thin hands; "shure, and I niver knew before how many of the darlint flowers God is able to make. Is He making them all day long, mavourneen?"

Tim sat down beside her. "He puts the roots in the ground, Nelly darlint," he said, reverently; "and then the little flowers have nothing to do but to come up when the spring comes."

"Would the roots grow in London, Tim?"

"I don't know, mavourneen; not so well as here, there's the want of the sun in London; 'tis the sun God puts in the sky to coax them to show their little faces."

"I think the flowers should like to come up here," said Nelly, "amongst the grass, and this soft stuff—what is it, Tim, it's *so* beautiful."

"That's moss, darlint; there's lots of moss in ould Ireland, cushla! but ye would have liked our ould home over the wather, that I just mind, with flowers, and traes, and all."

"And mother didn't dhrink thin?" said Nelly.

"No, darlint."

"Tim, Tim," shouted another voice, and Tim left his little sister and ran to a group of boys who were standing together, and gazing with wondering eyes at a small herd of graceful deer, which, at their approach, had of course bounded off amongst the long grass, and now stood under the trees at some distance, eyeing the children with their bright dark eyes, their tall antlers giving them a curiously strange appearance to the unaccustomed gaze of the young Londoners.

"Vot kind of a beast is that, Tim?" shouted the boys eagerly. Tim was their general resource in difficult matters; he managed to read more than the rest, and his good memory and quick parts enabled him to profit greatly by all information that he gathered.

"Shure now, and that's the pretty stags, the deer of Richmond Park; but they're shy bastes, and won't stand any nearer than that to be gazed upon."

Even as he spoke, they glided away with their light, bounding step, and soon were lost to view.

"This is vot I call a stunning sort of a place," said one boy; "the sort of place I should like to live at ven I'm a man; it's better than poking in streets all day long. I vish I had plenty of money, and then I'd come and live in the country."

"Faith, thin, ye'll have to work hard first, and airn yer money, Bob," said the Irish boy, "and set up yer housekeeping in one of the little mansions that's dotted about here amongst the traes for the lords and ladies to live in."

There was a general laugh at Bob.

"Never mind," he said; "ven I hears a farmer vants a boy out this vay, I shall look alive, and come and take the job."

"You can't plough," said the children.

"Can't I learn then?" asked Bob. "Tim 'll tell you; Tim knows ve can learn anything ve try; can't ve, Tim?"

"Shure and if we can't, we want brains," said Tim.

A little way off a merry party were chasing a football; in another direction kites were flying; girls and boys were merrily running over the soft green carpet; and to a great many others, hard-worked during almost every day of their young lives, it was exquisite pleasure to lie and sit about under the trees, to look up at the clear blue of the heavens, and the waving branches, and down at the flowers around them; little ones trooped along, their poor apologies for hats and bonnets bent all ways by the weight of the bluebells with which they were adorned; boys waved hawthorn boughs high above their heads in triumph; girls wondered at the varied hues of golden celandine, and ragged robins, and the little purple flowers of the ground ivy. "Little darlint Nelly," as Tim called her, was not the only one who felt in paradise that day.

Mr. Knight, as he went about with Geraldine and Minnie Christie gambolling together at his side, or walking quietly in advance, telling childish secrets under leafy boughs, came upon one little group that interested him greatly. Mr. Philp had already told him their history. Two little sisters belonging to the Band of Hope had a sister at home, a sempstress, who acted towards them

the part of a mother, for they were orphans; she herself, though she battled so bravely for their sake with disease and hunger, was evidently in a consumption, and could no longer hide the pain she suffered from her little sisters. —they came to Mr. Philp and begged that she might be allowed to share the holiday in the wood instead of one of them, as they thought it might make her nearly well again. The young man was deeply affected by the generous rivalry of the little ones, who each in turn pleaded that she might be allowed to give her ticket to Emily. "Stop, dear children," he had said at last; "I have one ticket left that does not belong to anybody, and, as I know Mr. Knight would give me leave, Emily shall have that, and go with you."

How warmly they thanked him, and then they ran home with the glad tidings to the bare room in which Emily sat, stitching away by her dim candle, while her cough every now and then compelled her to pause, and waste a few of those precious moments that should buy them bread. Before these three sisters Mr. Knight now paused. Emily was reclining on the grass, her head and shoulders supported against the trunk of a tree, over which little Grace and Annie, her young sisters, had placed an old shawl; the children had each left her in turn to gather large nosegays of bluebells and other flowers, and Tim had laid a monster bough of hawthorn beside Emily's greenwood couch—it scented the air with its delicious fragrance; Annie was adorning her sister's hat with flowers, Grace was tying up others to carry home.

Minnie and Geraldine had wandered away, so Mr

Knight sat down beside Emily. "You enjoy this lovely day, I trust?" he said kindly, while the young girl's pale cheeks crimsoned with pleasure and embarrassment. She answered respectfully,—

"I never expected to enjoy anything so much again on earth, sir."

"You have not been often into the country lately, I fear?"

"Oh no, sir;"—she paused, then she added, "do you know, Mr. Knight, I had quite forgotten how beautiful God had made it all; I had forgotten that trees reached so far towards the sky, and that flowers were so exquisitely lovely. I can never, never thank you enough for allowing me to come to-day, and for letting Grace and Annie see such a place as this."

"It gives me as much pleasure, Emily, as it can you," said Mr. Knight; "but is not your resting-place rather uncomfortable—could we not make it better with another shawl or two? See, my child, run over to that lady who stands far away there by those two other ladies, she in the black jacket, and ask her for my rug; stay, I will send a note." He hastily scribbled a line and sent it to Miss Cornelia by little Grace, who returned shortly with the soft rug; this he placed behind Emily's shoulders, making a deliciously luxurious cushion for the weary frame of the young sempstress.

"You manage to provide for these children and yourself, Emily. How much can you earn a-week?"

"About four or five shillings when I'm pretty well, sir; and then Grace does a few errands for our neighbours, and brings in a few pence; and even little Annie

earns something now and then by minding a baby; and they both help me to sew—they are very good children."

"And do three of you live and pay for everything out of five or six shillings a-week? Why, my child, it is starvation."

"A great many are much worse off than we are, sir. I know one poor woman whose husband drinks, and never brings her a penny piece hardly; and she doesn't get more than I do; and there are five children and herself."

"How could I best help you, Emily?" asked Mr. Knight after a pause.

"Grace and Annie run away and play, dears," said Emily; and the children obeyed at once. "Oh, sir," said the young girl when they had gone, "if only you would promise to see to them a little when I am dead—I know as well as possible that I can't live long—my mother went off just as I am going; and the thought of them troubles me."

"Don't give up hope yet," said Mr. Knight, kindly; "I have a plan to propose to you. I should like you to try a thorough change of air and scene, and see whether that would do you any good. There is an institution in Kent, in which I am interested, for the recovery of overworked, over-strained young people such as yourself. Many have come away from it, after a few months, well and strong; all have been partially benefited. Suppose you go there—take the little girls with you—I will engage to maintain them in some tidy woman's cottage in the village for six months, and they may be with you a good deal by day. They must be willing to be useful, and do

what they can to help. Should you like to try this plan?"

Mr. Knight need not have asked. The pale face was lit up with the sunshine of hope, and she could only answer, "God bless you, sir."

"We will see about it then, Emily. Don't take any fresh work in hand. Meanwhile, keep a brave heart, and don't want for anything necessary." Mr. Knight slipped a sovereign into the thin hand.

The poor girl, utterly overwhelmed, began to cry; and then the good merchant talked gently to her of the fair earth, the beauties around them—leading her on to speak freely of those still brighter beauties above, with which, to-day, the trees, and flowers, and birds had seemed to bring her into sweeter, closer unison.

Shouts of laughter were now heard at a little distance. Tom Christie had climbed a tree, and was perched in it, shaking down a snowy shower of hawthorn blossom on Minnie and Geraldine below, from which they ran away, and then returned again as eager for the fun as ever. Mr. Knight rose, shook hands with Emily, and joined in their mirth.

The sound of a gong summoned them to dinner. Each child received a small meat-pie, another of gooseberries, and an orange, and was left to carry it away, and feast together or apart as they chose, while their entertainers sat down to a cold collation under the trees. After this there was more play, more rest, more enjoyment, more rifling of hawthorn-trees and bluebell dells; and when, at six o'clock, the gong again summoned them, this time for tea, nearly all of them came to the rendezvous laden

with flowers—a few had found empty birds'-nests, which were looked upon with intense admiration by all the rest. Every bird that warbled its sweet song, every beetle that stalked amongst the grass, every butterfly that winged its tiny flight, was an object of extreme curiosity and interest to these city-bred children, who, most of them, had no experience whatever of the thousand forms of life and beauty with which God has adorned His fair sweet world.

Tim, and Fred Coleridge, and Mr. Philp, and all the teachers, had had enough to do to answer the droll questions that the children put. They expressed unbounded delight at the songs of the larks, and thrushes, and blackbirds; "'twas better than they'd ever heard them sing in Seven Dials and Whitechapel."

"They likes it better, I reckon, out here in the trees; 'cause trees is like *home*, and houses is like *prison*, ain't it, teacher?" said one poor little lad, who knew, from sad experience, the difference between the freedom of home and the constraint of prison discipline; but not since he was a Band of Hope boy, as he would speedily have informed you. "No; he didn't know no better then—he drank, and smoked, and played pitch-and-toss, and swore; but he does now—he knows God sees when he steals and acts bad, and is so sorry for him."

And now, after a bountiful tea, that glorious day in the greenwood is over. The sun has shone, the birds have sung, the flowers have bloomed as brightly and gaily and sweetly as possible, and the poor children reluctantly gather together to move away from so much beauty and joy. Mr. Knight thinks of their grief, and it shadows

the content of his soul; but another thought inspires him. Why not give them something glorious to look forward to through the gloom of their future! He is on one of the waggons in a moment, and stands waving his hand. There is silence; and the children sing the verse of a favourite hymn, a wonderfully powerful quietus. The astonished woodland birds listen to their human rivals, and then chirp more merrily than before. Then Mr. Knight's voice is heard again,—

"Children, have you enjoyed yourselves?"

A loud, hearty "Yes, sir," bursts from the lips of the five hundred.

"Did you have enough to eat?"

"Plenty, sir."—"I should think we *did*."—"Ain't it been a jolly tuck?" These were the answers.

"Did you want any strong drink to make you happy?"

"No, sir."—"If we'd had it, we should have been quarrelling, like father does," said one boy, *sotto voce*.

"Should you have been happier with some beer?"

"No, sir."

"Are you sorry you're going away?"

"Dreadful sorry, sir."—Some of the little girls were almost crying.

Mr. Knight paused. If ever you stand with a blessing to give away, and see before you the future recipients of it, poor and destitute, needing your help, you will understand why he paused. "Dear children, should you like to come here again next summer?"

What a noise they made; what a "big shout" it was, as little Nelly said, that rent the air from the five hun-

dred throats. "Then I promise you, if God spares me, you shall."

"Och, thin, long life to yer honour," said Tim; and all the children laughed merrily, and began to scamper about for very glee.

"Listen once more—let us thank God, dear children."

"Oh, our Father," said Mr. Knight, and he knelt down, while all the children stood around on the greensward in silence, "we all desire to thank Thee very much for this beautiful day in the greenwood, amongst Thy trees and flowers, with Thy bright sky above us, and Thy fair green grass beneath our feet. Make us to remember it is Thy love that gives us all; and make us hate to grieve Thee by our sins. Hear us, for the sake of Christ, our Elder Brother. Amen."

Mr. Philp gave out, "Praise God, from whom all blessings flow," and with a new meaning in their hearts attached to those reverent words of adoration, the children sung them quietly and well.

The waggon party drove off, the rest soon after walked to the station; and all reached their homes in safety just as the sun sank to rest in splendour, shooting down golden beams even amongst the walls and houses of the busy, noisy London world.

CHAPTER XVII.

FIGHTING A BABY.

"MURTHER! murther!! murther!!!" The voice was that of a woman, and it smote upon Tim's ears as he entered Tyler's Court late one evening just a week after the day in the greenwood, and after attending a temperance meeting with Mr. Philp in another part of London.

"Murther! murther!! murther!!!" It was from the window of the next house to that of Tim's home, and he knew the voice now; it belonged to an Irish woman, a friend of his mother's, but one who had not gone to nearly such extreme depths of degradation as Ellen Maloney—a quiet sort of woman, the miserable wife of a drunken, hard-handed wretch, a bricklayer, who took her "dhraps" of gin to soothe the agony of a breaking heart, and to deaden the sound of her children's cries for bread.

"Murther! murther!!" The tones grew more and more full of extreme fright and anguish; and Tim bounded up the stairs, unmindful of danger to himself.

"Tim, Tim, shure it's kind of ye to come, and nobody else would help me. Look at me baby."

The wretched creature was crying bitterly, as she held out towards Tim an object that made his heart ache with sorrow. The face of the baby, not a year old, was bruised and mangled fearfully; its poor little lips were bleeding, and its cheeks were pallid. There was a frightful swelling over the eye, and one of the little arms hung helplessly at its side.

"He's just killed me baby, and me too, the villain," shrieked the woman again, adding a curse deep and bitter against the man that stood with lowering brow and savage face eyeing Tim from the other end of the room. Then, with a sudden spring, he flew again at the wife whom, in sober days, he loved, and began to aim his fists at her with fearful energy, swearing all the while at Tim, who caught the tiny child from its mother's arms, and flew over the stairs to summon help.

"Will Simmons is killing his wife; do go to her," he shouted on each landing as he ran, and he heard low growls and comments from men and women in reply.

"I'm not going to interfere; it's only one of their cursed rows."

"Oh, it takes a long time to *kill* anybody."

"If I go in, he'll kill me, I reckon."

Tim was at the entrance of the court and up the lane by this time, looking up and down the busy thoroughfare into which it led. He espied the welcome blue dress for which he gazed so anxiously.—"Police! Police!"

"What do you want, Tim?" said the man, as he turned and looked at the lad.

"Oh, Mr. Squires, I'm so glad I've met you. Look at this poor little baby; and the man, the father, Will Simmons, No. 5 in the court, up-stairs, is *killing* his wife. Will you go to her? What must I do with this poor little creature?"

"Take her, as fast as your legs will carry you, to the hospital, Tim," said the policeman, pausing a moment to glance at the wretched little one. "A man *must* be a very brute of a fellow to treat a *baby* that way;" and he hurried off to the court, while Tim went on, as he had been told, to the hospital. He was soon before the resident surgeon and the matron, still holding the baby in his arms.

"What's this?" cried the surgeon. "A *baby* knocked about, and with a black eye! Good heavens, who's been fighting a puny baby?"

Tim told all he knew, and the surgeon looked grave and sad. "There's but little hope that the poor little creature will rally. If we do bring her round, she will owe her life to you. Alas! is it any blessing to restore life to the child of a drunkard? You're a kind lad, and a brave one too, to act the part you have done," he added, looking at Tim, and taking the little one from him.

"A warm bath, nurse, at once," he said to the woman who entered at this moment. "There's but a gleam of life left in this poor bruised little innocent."

Tim only stayed to furnish the necessary particulars relating to the child, and then hurried off to see what had become of the mother. There was a dreadful row in Tyler's Court as he re-entered. On leaving Tim, the

policeman had quickly made his way into the room indicated, and found the husband and wife still fighting, she with the desperation of despair, he, with cowardly brute force, striving to deaden and stun her. She had only one advantage over the drunken madman, she was sober; and now and then she eluded a terrific blow, or gained a slight advantage over him. But her strength was failing, and a few more moments must have drawn down the black shadow of murderous death upon that awful fray had not the policeman stepped in.

"Stop that, will you?" he cried in a loud authoritative tone, as the man, having thrown the woman to the ground, was about to kick her. The intoxicated husband paused for a moment, and then rushed furiously at Police-constable Squires; but happily not before he had sprung his rattle from the open window, and knew that help was near at hand. Another policeman came just as the two men were grappling together; but Police-constable Squires was a very different antagonist from the helpless wife; and he managed to throw William Simmons on the floor just as his comrade entered. Then they tried to drag the furious drunkard away from the room; but he kicked and fought so wildly, that further assistance was necessary to secure him and get him down-stairs; and the police, and the men they had summoned to their aid, were all struggling together to bind him, as Tim turned into the court.

"Tim, lad, is that you?" said Police-constable Squires. "Will you take my rattle, run up the lane and spring it again?—we need more help."

Tim did as he was bid, and was back again presently,

followed by two other members of the force; and even then they all had full occupation to convey the powerful man to the station-house.

"Troublesome customer, and no mistake," said one "What's he been about?"

"Fighting a baby, the mean rascal," said Police-constable Squires, who was a family man, and very fond of his children. "A great fellow, strong enough to fight an elephant, pommelling a poor little innocent baby of his own. If ever a fellow deserved to be hung, he did."

Tim ran up to poor Mrs. Simmons. She had fainted, and was now surrounded by not less than a dozen women, many of them with a little gin in a tea-cup, trying to pour it down her throat. Tim advanced with authority, young as he was: "Let her have air; and bring me wather," he said. "Don't crowd, for mercy's sake, or she will die."

He dashed the water over the forehead, sadly bruised and bleeding. He moistened the lips; and with his young, strong arms he raised the poor creature and laid her on her wretched bed, only a little less hard and bare than the floor.

"I have some tea in our room," he said. "Mother Smith, will you watch her till I bring some? *Don't* give her gin; you'll dhrive her crazy if you do. One of you go for a docthor."

"Where's her baby, Tim? She was calling for it afore she fainted."

"She's at the hospital, poor little darlint," said Tim. "But I don't much think—"

Whatever Tim thought he wisely kept it to himself,

fearful, perhaps, that the poor mother would be told of her child's almost hopeless case before she was able to bear the news. He returned with his little tea-pot; and as the poor creature drank the warm beverage, she revived a little, opened her eyes, and gazed earnestly at Tim. He would never forget that gaze.

"Baby's at the hospital, minded by the docthor; and he's a raal kind sort of man, Mrs. Simmons," he said, in answer to it. "All will be done that he can do; and they ordered her a warm bath."

"I wish we were both dead togither—me baby and me," said the poor mother, crying and sobbing in a weak, hopeless sort of way.

"Mrs. Smith," said Tim to the woman who sat beside the poor half-murdered wife, "couldn't ye take a little warm wather and wash the poor dear's face afore the docthor comes?"

"Had we better, Tim? Hadn't we best let him see her as she is?"

There was no time for anything to be done. A policeman had returned with one doctor; and the woman who had been sent came back with another. They both ordered her to be taken immediately to the hospital; and one of them drove off in a cab with her and a policeman at once. Tim went to his home; the children were all asleep; his mother was out; his father had got a job of work at a distance, and was not expected home that night, so Tim lay down on his own small iron bed (he had bought two, but the one he had given to his mother had gone to the pawn-shop), and lay thinking and thinking for hours. That night was a sort of bridge

for Tim, over which he stepped from childhood to manhood; young as he was, the part he had acted that night had been that of a man—the helpless woman, the yet more helpless child, had sought and required protection from him against the drink-formed demon who called himself their husband and father. And a new, deep-seated resolve sprung up in Tim's mind as he reflected on the awful scenes he had witnessed; a resolve that, if ever circumstances would permit, he would consecrate the whole of his time and energies to the temperance movement, to the noble work of removing from the world that stain on all civilization, that blight over all that is fair and of good report, that mockery of all Christianity, which are caused by the drinking customs of society and the common sale of intoxicating liquors. That mutilated baby, that bleeding little face, that puny form, those half-closed, trembling eyelids; oh, would they not be a text from which teetotalism might be preached, and no child should be unaffected, no sister unreached, no wife untouched, no mother unmoved! Fighting a baby! Could he not make cowardly, drunken parents tremble as he told them of it? Would not tender, loving fathers shrink with horror from the thought? Could not the Church of God be roused to enthusiastic hatred against this Satanic agency for the sake of this little one for whom Christ died? "Oh!" vowed Tim, as a righteous indignation swelled his young heart, and great tears of sympathy for that little victim trickled over his face; "with God's help, I'll do more; I'll work all me life long; I'll *niver* be tired of working for the blessed timperance cause."

With the tears undried that did honour to his dawning manhood, Tim at last fell asleep.

Next day he was summoned by Police-constable Squires as a witness against William Simmons. He gave his evidence well, and was complimented by the magistrates on his courage and promptitude. But Tim never felt less proud in his life. He was full of sorrow; and many and many a time that day he looked at the arm on which he had carried the child, almost expecting to see again the plaintive little face that seemed to him to cry to heaven for vengeance on the drink, that had transformed its father into a baby-fighter. And in the crowded Police Court—crowded by wretched women and haggard men from Tyler's Court and Candlemas Alley, and their neighbourhoods, curious to see the fate of the drunken bully—stood Will Simmons, pale, sunken, wan—the picture of misery. The fury caused by a poisonous stimulant was over now. In dim, dreamy outline he remembered the horrid events of the preceding night, that had almost—nay, perhaps, quite—for the child's life hung on a thread—made him a murderer. He listened in bewildered silence to the dreadful story the policeman, and Tim, and the doctors had to tell; and he knew, without lifting his eyes, that every creature in that court thought him the cowardly, villainous ruffian that he was. All self-respect was out of the man. A trembling horror of death, or, worse still, solitary confinement, was indeed before him. But he knew none pitied him, none cared for his fate, save, perhaps, the woman he had most deeply wronged. So, when the magistrate asked him if he had anything to say for himself as to the charges

entered against him, he simply said, "No, your worship; I was mad drunk;" and received accordingly a lecture on the folly of drinking, and wasting his money and character, and endangering the lives of those he should have held most dear. And then he was remanded for a week, on account of the baby's dangerous condition. He stepped down the stairs into the cell; and another victim of strong drink—a wild young citizen of superior appearance, who had assaulted the police as he came from a music hall—took his place in the dock.

Nothing whatever was said by the magistrate of the only man who had profited by the drunkenness of William Simmons; no reproof was administered to the publican who had supplied the poison, and counted the gains into his already overflowing coffers. Nor did the magistrate hesitate that day at dinner to lift the accustomed glass of sherry to his lips, and to swallow his usual allowance of grog for his "night-cap;" *something* blinded him—appetite, or custom, or prejudice—or he would have seen the serpentine link that connected these actions of his own with those of the drunken madman he that day had remanded to the cell.

Another week passed, and still the child was in danger, and so there was another remand for the guilty father; one more week, and the little martyr, the victim of a father's brutality, slept the sleep that knows no waking.

Biddy Simmons recovered to find her baby dead, and her husband committed for trial. The judge of the Home Circuit sentenced him to fourteen years' penal servitude, and condemned in no sparing language the horrible wickedness and cruelty of his conduct; the man

needed no one now to tell him this: the sobriety of the prison had restored him to his senses, and the parting between him and his poor wife was affecting in the extreme. Forgiveness, weeping, lamentations, on her part; despair, repentance, bitter tears, on his; and then a separation that looked almost like death.

Would you teetotallers not have even drunken baby-fighters punished? asks some indignant reader. Of course we would; but can it be right that the revenue of a Christian government should profit by the temptations that incite men to commit such atrocious crimes? Can it be right that the whole weight of her penal authority should fall on the heads of the *victims* of these legalized temptations?

CHAPTER XVIII.

A LIFE ON THE OCEAN WAVE.

THE *Geraldine* stood out to sea with a fair breeze, the tide in her favour, and a contented crew. Captain Seymour was popular amongst his men, and deservedly so; his character grew in all that was good and manly, and he became more careful of the comfort and well-being of all who sailed under him. There was a long voyage before him to China and the Eastern Archipelago, and it was therefore with no small satisfaction that he placed his wife and little children on board, and knew that around him would be gathered that small circle that made the home and the resting-place of his affectionate heart. Fred Coleridge and his mates had bidden a long adieu to their friends, knowing that two years, at least, would pass before they again floated up the Thames, or even looked upon the familiar coast-line of dear old England.

"You will be quite a grown-up young lady, Miss Geraldine, when I see you again," Fred had said, as the pretty child—still a child in thought, and manner, and

artlessness—had placed her little hand in his, to bid him "good-bye."

Geraldine was still the guiding-star in life to the lad—a pure, sweet embodiment of all that was fairest in his hopes, dearest in his dreams, brightest in his thoughts. To sail in his own ship over glowing seas, with Geraldine for the lovely presiding genius of his cabin, this was Fred's beau-ideal of pleasure; her name was woven into his prayers; her image was in his heart,—a love as chivalrous and beautiful as ever adorned poet's tale was growing up in the heart of our sailor-boy for our darling little heroine, though he dared not allow himself to hope that his day-dreams could ever be realized.

Over the sea bounded the good ship *Geraldine*, over the bright waters of the Atlantic, and still the wind was in her favour and drove her merrily on. The sky was blue and cloudless above; the sea was blue and clear beneath,—a broad glorious expanse of water, nothing but water, for miles and miles around, as far as the eye could reach.

Mrs. Seymour and her children had come on deck. Charlie was quite a little favourite with everybody—a bold, bright child, fearless and merry; and sailors love to have a pet of some kind on board—kitten, or bird, or monkey, or child—it suits their soft hearts and generous dispositions. Little Fanny was on her mother's knee, and Charlie played about. A large pile of rope was placed near one side of the vessel, and the little fellow mounted it: it made him taller, it even enabled him to look out over the bulwarks; he got down again and up again, and thus amused himself for some minutes. The mother

heard the sound of his little feet, and felt secure of his safety.

He got up again, paused to look over the side, went on tip-toe; the vessel gave a slight lurch, the little one lost his balance; there was a sharp cry, "Mamma! mamma!" from the falling child, and then a splash in the water beneath. A young sailor dashed past, threw off his jacket, and was over the vessel's side in a moment. He caught the sinking Charlie in his strong arm, and moved forward in the direction the ship was taking. There was a general alarm on deck: the mother clasped little Fanny tightly in her arms, and gazed with white, terrified face and tearless eyes on the swimmer and his precious burden; Captain Seymour, half frantic with grief, gave orders wildly and incoherently. It took some little time to tack the ship, to reverse the helm, to lower the boat; and each moment of the agonizing suspense seemed an hour to the hearts of the parents. The brave swimmer had not learned his skill for naught in Plymouth harbour; but his strength was failing him—it was no easy task to keep afloat with the heavy form of the child clinging to him. How that poor mother prayed! What cries of agony unheard by mortal ears went ringing heavenwards from her bleeding heart! The poor captain was only restrained by main force from leaping into the water for his boy. Would they never be able to help the brave Fred? who, for the second time in his life, was instrumental in saving the life of this little child! He is behind the ship now; his strength fails him; he no longer attempts to follow them, but only to preserve little Charlie; and, if

possible, himself. The boat is off to his rescue; the oars fly through the water; Watson and Isaac the black are rowing.

"There, thank God," cries the skipper; "they have reached them! No; what? Fanny, my girl, cling to me." He puts his arms round his wife's drooping form; her poor face is utterly colourless, her lips are white, she totters from extreme agitation.

"This suspense is dreadful," cries the skipper again; "won't they ever get to them? Ah, yes!"

"They are in, capen," cries old Sam from the helm; "thank the Lord, they are in."

The boat is rowed almost as swiftly to the ship again, and the little child and the exhausted swimmer are hauled on board; life is all but extinct; Fred's face looks purple, little Charlie's wan. Active measures are resorted to—at old Sam's suggestion the cook has hot coffee ready, and blankets have been prepared for their reception.

"Don't give the dear lad brandy," says old Sam, "whatever you do; he'll never forgive you for it, and 'twill trouble him sure enough," so coffee is brought and administered to both patients, and the mother chafes her darling, and soon has the blessed joy of seeing the dear eyes unclose, and hearing the faintly spoken word, "Mamma!"

Around Fred's berth stand Watson and Isaac, while old Sam rubs his chest, and they all wait more and more anxiously for signs of returning life and consciousness; they call the thankful skipper from beside his wife, and his face grows sad again as he gazes at the noble young preserver of his child.

"Can it be that he is dead?" they ask.

"God forbid!" cries the captain aloud, in a tone of agony, and uses over and over again every means he has ever heard of for the restoration of animation. An hour of terrible uncertainty passes, but they never relax their efforts for a moment. *Does* the young face grow less death-like? *Is* that a heaving of his broad strong chest? The skipper watches with the others, as if he had watched a beloved son or young brother; dear as the lad had been to him before, he has endeared himself a thousand-fold this day. As he looks at him he thinks of the noble watchwords of the boy's life, "pure and brave," and feels that he would fain have given up his own poor, worthless existence rather than that the young hero should have sacrificed his.

"He breathes, capen;" old Sam's voice was choked, and now that his doubts were past, the tears came rolling down over the old sailor's withered cheeks. It was quite true, the blood flowed back into the veins of Fred Coleridge; they again applied the hot coffee to his lips, and this time with wonderful effect: he opened his eyes, tried to speak, and fainted in the effort. For more than a week he lay helpless in his berth, in a high fever; and many weeks elapsed before he could take his place on board. Mrs. Seymour nursed him like a sister. Little Charlie had quickly recovered the ill effects of his sudden plunge and long continuance in the water, and played about as usual, but with a wholesome dread of getting near the bulwarks of the vessel, or of straying far from his mother's side; he crept into Fred's little cabin, and climbed upon his bed, and prattled artlessly to him, and

told him how glad he was he did not let him go to the bottom of the sea.

Old Sam spent hours in the lad's cabin, reading to him, and singing hymns, and telling long yarns that often soothed the invalid into refreshing and health-restoring sleep. One of these days, Fred asked his old friend to give him some account of his own life, or of anything remarkable that had ever happened to him.

It was a hot, calm afternoon, the wind had dropped, the ship made hardly any progress through the glassy waves, the warm, broad sun-rays filled the little cabin, and Fred lay weak and exhausted on his pillows, with a very thin, pale face, and almost transparent hands.

"The heat is sadly against the lad," the captain often said, on days like these, when Fred's protracted weakness and want of appetite made him anxious and unhappy; "if we could only get a good breath of air, or a stiff sea-breeze, it would set the dear fellow up again."

And old Sam would answer, "Yes, surely, capen; but the Lord, He knows best, He makes it plain to me that Fred Coleridge will not die, for He has other work for him to do."

And now the old man listens to Fred's request for the history of his life, and answers, "I don't need to tell ee, my dear, that I be a west country man; thee's knaw when thee's hear a Cornishman speak, any day of thee life, I reckon."

Fred nodded.

"I was born," continued the old sailor, "down to Flushing, nigh to Falmouth, and overlooking the bay, just like Falmouth do; my fayther, he kep a little kiddle-

wink *—thee's knaw what I mean; there weren't no beer-shops in them days; but his house were only a little place, and he just sold drink to the sailors and boatmen, and like that. There was a power of drinking went on in our house, and folks did say as how faythe smuggled his sperrits into the house, and had dealings as he shouldn't have had; the Lord have mercy on him, there was many a nate little cove to run a boat into near us, and the Cornish boys bore a bad character then for wracking and smuggling. They was a sort of heathens, I reckon, till John Wesley come amongst them; but that was before my time, and there were a good many saints in Cornwall amongst the Methodys at the time when I was born, a good deal of hymn-singing amongst the miners; but my faythe and mother didn't care for anything of the sort. Faythe made money fast, somehow, and brought me up in idleness—neither sending me to school, nor making me work at home—a bad life for a lad, as thee knaw. They had only me and one girl, a tidy little maid, more than four years younger, so they hadn't to be anxious about their family. I grew up as fond of my pipe and glass as the worst drunkard in Flushing, and as idle and careless as a youngster could be; the Lord only knows what time and strength I have wasted in the devil's service—and he was a hard master, though I didn't think so then. At that time they wanted men badly to serve on board the king's ships, and pressed them into the service; for few wanted to go, and those that did were able to, any day, and welcome. You've heard tell of Snap-Jack, haven't you, Fred?"

* Drinkshop.

"Oh yes, Uncle Sam; I've heard father tell about that. His uncle was taken, I've heard him say—carried right off without a moment's warning."

"Some folks call it the press-gang; us down long west country call it snap-jack; I reckon it means about the same. I had a great dread of being taken, and, whenever I thought about it, I used to drink to make me forget it again. One night—I mind it well, 'twas winter time, but not very cold, though a regular storm—the sea was chopping bravely, and we had a ship's crew in at fayther's that couldn't put to say.* Fayther called his house 'The Jolly Tar,' and us kept up its name that night, surely; and we were laughing, and singing, and carrying on fine games, the tars, and one or two Flushing boys, and myself. All of a sudden, a young fellow that had left the house came back, opened the door where we were all drinking and roaring, and said, 'Snap-jack's coming, look out for yourselves;' and then was gone again. I was more than half-drunk, and hardly understood the meaning of his trembling white lips and pale cheeks, but the others did. Without a moment's delay the song was hushed, and we all spoke in a whisper. Fayther, and mother, and little Sue whisked away the pewter-pots and pipes, and bade us hide ourselves. Mother stuffed me hastily in a cupboard where she kept coal and wood, and another soon came in beside me. I was too foolishly drunk to keep silence. 'For God's sake be quiet, Sam, or it will be all up with us,' whispered Tom Polbathick, who had hid with me; 'one wag of your drunken tongue may ruin us altogether.' 'Where are the rest?' I hic-

* Sea.

cupped. 'In all sorts of places; but hush, you fool,' said Tom, as the tread of feet was heard outside in the drinking-room; 'keep yourself quiet, if you ever did in your life.' Had I been in my senses, I should have obeyed; but, drunk, I was blind to the danger, and talked on. Tom put his hand over my mouth. 'Stop that row, or I'll make you,' he whispered savagely, in desperation. 'Who have you got in the cupboard, missis?' we heard asked outside; and my mother answered boldly, 'Nobody; nothing, maister, but my firing, coal and wood.' The lie did not save us; for my voice had been heard. 'Your spirits must be very strong to make billets of wood drunk,' said the man, laughing. The door was thrown open, and we were dragged out. Tom swore at me for my folly. We were both bound, and carried off; and for fifteen years I never see'd Flushing no more. What I thought the worst thing in my life happened at Flushing, and so did the best," continued old Sam after a pause. "There I was taken by the snap-jacks, and carried off from my home; and there I was overtaken by the Spirit of God, and carried straight to the home of my soul. Do you care to hear how that happened, Fred?"

"Of course I do, Uncle Sam," answered Fred, a little dreamily.

"You've heard tell—or your fayther has, anyhow—of old Boatswain Smith?" asked old Sam.

"Yes."

"I have to thank him for what he did for my soul. I was a careless sinner up to my fiftieth year—a hard drinker, a big swearer, and a tremendous boaster; those

three things often go hand in hand, Fred Coleridge. When old Boatswain was going to preach down to Flushing, I offered to answer him; and prove how well a man could get on without any God. So we were to have a grand discussion; and lots of salts came to hear us. No sooner had he got me in tow, than he says, says he, 'Well, mate, and what about no God. When you were in that storm on the West Indy coast in the *Firefly*, who did you call to then?' So he took down my fore top-sail at once, Fred; for I had forgotten, though he hadn't, that I had been known to pray in a storm. So I lowered my colours, then, and listened to him instead. 'Twas all very plain what he said; and I saw that Captain Jesus was the right sort of Master for me to sail under; and I've tried to mind His orders ever since. Bless me," continued old Sam, looking at Fred's berth, "I've talked my boy to sleep!"

CHAPTER XIX.

TIM'S ILLNESS.

HOW often it happens in our lives that whole years full of monotonous circumstances pass quietly away, and then events crowd upon us so fast that we have hardly time to realize one position in which we find ourselves before we are hastily summoned into another, where we least expected to be.

Tim's life had been one constant succession of useful duties, pleasures, and troubles, almost unvaried in their nature, for the two years that the good ship *Geraldine* had ploughed the mighty deep; and our young heroine had been so industriously occupied with her studies, so happily busy doing good, that she had had scarcely time to notice the great change in her outward appearance. Perhaps none was more conscious of this change than Mr. Knight. The gentle yet high-spirited child had not lost any of her old, sweet, affectionate manner; but now, at nearly sixteen years of age, she was rapidly developing the aspirations and instincts of her nature. Her ex-

quisite face—expressive and winning from its very artlessness—had yet a lingering charm, half shy, half undefined, borrowed from her advancing womanhood; something that made her guardian tremble at the thought of one day losing her from his side; not because of the claims of unknown parents, but by that mystery of love which unites two, hitherto unacquainted, more closely than by any other tie.

Tim still held his respectable position in Messrs. Knight and Christie's counting-house; still helped Mr. Philp in the night-school and the Band of Hope meetings, where he often addressed the children with such a happy play of fancy, and so much earnestness of feeling, that his teacher, between whom and himself there had grown up a solid friendship, predicted great things for Tim as an orator. Tim had taken another room for himself in the same house with his parents, which he furnished decently; and here he kept all his own things, and his gifts to Nelly, locking them from his mother's greedy clutches, and entrusting the care of his room to no one but his "darlint" little sister, who delighted to keep it bright and clean as her willing hands could make it. Poor little Nelly, she was still fragile and ailing; but carefully guarded from much that was unhappy in her lot by her devoted brother.

And now the warm summer sunshine had changed for the hot heavy atmosphere of a sultry autumn, and amongst the crowded occupants of Tyler's Court and Candlemas Alley, as well as in many another thickly-peopled district of the great city, where poverty and misery are huddled together, fever entered, working

frightful havoc with the children, and striking down many a father and mother, who were the bread-winners of the family. Poor Biddy Simmons was one of the first victims. Biddy, who ever since the death of her child, and the transportation of her husband, had striven to keep body and soul together for herself and her three little ones by selling fruit and toys along the London streets. Tim had many a time given the poor creature a trifle from his own earnings, or carried a loaf of bread to her hungry children during her absence. He had, after much coaxing and persuasion, induced her to take the "timperance pledge;" and he looked well after his convert, knowing how sorely she would be tempted to seek comfort in a "dhrap o' gin." But, latterly, she had seemed to take a real interest in the question, and, what was better still, she attended the City Mission service with her little children on the Sunday evenings, and began to make a rather more respectable appearance, through her increasingly thrifty habits. When poor Biddy was laid upon her bed of languishing, and the doctor pronounced her disease to be "the fever," Tim did not neglect her. He pinched his own comforts to provide a woman to wait on her, and often sat by her side the whole evening to relieve the tired watcher.

"An angel from heaven couldn't have been more raal kind than that blessed boy, Tim Maloney," said poor Biddy, many and many a time, as she watched his retreating form, and turned herself wearily on her pillow, or pressed to her lips the cool refreshing fruit he brought to her.

One scorching day in August, Tim set out for the

office, with a strange feeling of exhaustion and fatigue; but it was not Tim's custom to shrink from work, and you must have gone far to find a more conscientious, industrious clerk than he. He kissed Nelly before starting, and said, "We'll be afther having a walk in the Park, Nelly darlint, or a ride on the river, this evening together," and Nelly's eyes grew bright as she clung to him and thanked him. Tim often indulged Nelly thus. A penny ride on the steamer took them far from Tyler's Court, and opened up to the sensitive, poetic mind of the child new wonders, new delights. Now and then, on a half-holiday, they heard the sweet music of the anthem in St. Paul's or Westminster Abbey, and through Nelly's brain the clear, sweet voices of the little choristers, which pierced the vaulted roofs, and trembled along the aisles, and hovered amongst the delicate stone tracery, would echo their delicious harmony for many and many a day after. Often they wandered in the parks, feasting their eyes on the greenness of the grass and trees, and the glassy beauty of the ornamental waters, which reflected every tint of the summer sky above, till the young girl grew weary, and then Tim sent her home in an omnibus, comforted and strengthened by the change of scene. Lately, Tim had been doing good in another way. He had written to his uncle in Canada, and proposed to him to send out Pat, the brother next in age to himself, to be a farm-labourer on his uncle's flourishing estate; and Patrick Maloney delighted, as was natural to his generous heart, to do a kind turn for anybody, especially for a child of his still dear though most erring brother, sent home to Tim enough money to buy his nephew clothes.

and to pay his expenses to Montreal. The boy had started three days before, and one great care and anxiety was thus removed from our hero's heart. The other boys were sadly wild and wayward: and as yet the kind influence of their elder brother had not been sufficient to induce them to attend school, or even to keep from drinking and swearing. Michael and Peter, with much of Tim's drollery, but little of Tim's good-humour, were the pests of Candlemas Alley. Once or twice already they had been taken before the magistrates for some petty theft or impudent beggary; and, so far, they resisted every effort Mr. Philp made to draw them into the meeting or the school. Baby Kitty, now nearly six years old, would be a life-long sufferer, through the neglect of her drunken mother, during her infancy. No visions of beauty would ever pass into her mind through her poor eyes: the little child was blind. She trotted after Nelly almost all day long, listening intently to the music of her voice, as she sweetly sang snatches and catches of songs which she had learned from wandering minstrels, or at the Band of Hope meetings and the Ragged School; or amused herself, as best she could, with an old wooden doll that Biddy Simmons had given to her.

Tim kissed poor little Kitty as well as his "darlint" Nelly, and was gone: but he walked heavily up the narrow alley and through the bustling streets, and when he had reached Messrs. Knight and Christie's counting-house he felt sadly sick and weary; still he would not complain. "Maybe it's nothing but a headache the morn; I'll try and make meself aisy," he said to himself,

and took some letters from Mr. Christie to copy, which that gentleman laid upon Tim's desk, as, with a pleasant "Good-morning, Tim," he disappeared into his private room. Tim began to write. How dreadfully indistinct everything looked to him; his lines went zig-zag across the paper; that would never do. He began again. His brain swam, his head throbbed, and his hands were hot and feverish. He could not quite understand it. A horrible dread entered his mind, "Was this the beginning of the terrible fever?" Mr. Christie's bell rang; Tim answered it.

"Tim, bring me that letter I told you to copy first."

"It is not quite done, sir."

"Not done! What on earth do you mean by taking all this time to copy one letter? Why, it is not like you, Tim, to be so idle."

Tim did not answer; he tried to frame words, but his throat felt dry and parched.

"What excuse have you to make?" said Mr. Christie, turning round to look at him—the expression of the lad's face, the dull eye, the fevered brow startled him. "Tim, you are ill; why didn't you say so? Good heavens, take care of yourself—Tim, Tim!"

There was a heavy fall in Mr. Christie's office, and the other clerks hurried in, wonderingly; poor Tim was lying on the floor, faint; and the kind-hearted merchant bent over him in some perplexity.

"Bring a glass of wine from the cupboard there," he said, pointing it out to one of the clerks; "in this extremity it will revive him, and he couldn't object to take it."

Mr. Philp pushed forward, holding a glass of water. "Pardon me, sir, but Tim would never get over it if he knew he had swallowed intoxicating drink; I think I can bring him round." He slipped off Tim's collar, loosened his shirt, drew away the narrow black cravat, and dashed the water on his fevered brow. Tim revived, opened his eyes, and smiled feebly at his teacher.

"I thought I was dying," he whispered in a low voice, but with a radiant smile, "and I wasn't afraid to die."

"Dying? no, no; you mustn't talk of dying, my good fellow," said Mr. Christie, in his hearty manner, a good deal affected by these touching words; "we want you about among us for many a long day. Moreton, fetch a cab. Philp, will you take him home? see to it that he has everything comfortable. I wish Knight had been here; you shouldn't have come this morning, Tim; we're not taskmasters, nor negro drivers; we don't want to work people to death."

Tim smiled gratefully, and pressed the kind hand that was outstretched to him at parting; they helped him into the cab, Mr. Philp following, and they drove off to Tyler's Court. What a sickening atmosphere seemed to surround them as they entered Candlemas Alley; how it grieved Mr. Philp to think of Tim's lying in it day after day in suffering and pain!

"Mr. Knight will remove him from this as soon as ever it is possible, I hope," he said to himself, as he assisted the sick youth up the wretched staircase to his own room; here they knocked, for Nelly had the key, and out came the young sister, from the mother's room, to meet the visitor.

"Tim!" She opened wide her sad dove-like eyes as she saw him: "Och! mavourneen, and what is it at all at all, and are ye ill, took wid the faver, Tim?"

There was inexpressible sweetness and tenderness in the tone; "Och, thin, but I'll have ye all comfortable in just one little moment." She unlocked the door, and revealed the neat bed and carefully arranged furniture of Tim's room. There were not many things in it, and all had been bought as cheaply as possible, but the good taste of Tim and his little sister was abundantly evident; two or three bright pictures, framed in wood by Tim's own hands, adorned the walls; with his and Nelly's and Pat's pledge-cards, and sheets of temperance songs, and a few popular hymns. A little painting of flowers by Nelly herself, not at all badly done, considering her want of training, and practice, and materials, was exactly opposite Tim's bed, together with a cheap likeness of himself and his "darlint;" in the window was a wooden frame, in which stood various plants, some in a very drooping condition, others—such as wall-flowers and scarlet geraniums—looked healthy enough; indeed, Nelly had won a prize of late at more than one flower-show, and was extremely proud of her pretty blossoms: she turned back the bed-clothes, smoothed the pillow, and retreated to make some toast and water for Tim, as Mr. Philp had directed. The child's cheeks were very pale, but her sweet lips were set resolutely, and though her eyes were filled with the tears she could not hide, she spoke in a cheerful, hopeful voice.

"It will be too much for you, Nelly, to nurse your brother," said Mr. Philp, when, after he had helped Tim

into bed, she again made her appearance, with the cooling drink.

"Oh no, yer honour, it won't, thin," answered Nelly; "and I'll be afther making him *so* comfortable: *don't* send him away to the hospital, now that I can nurse him, and take care of him; ye won't, will ye, yer honour?" She stood by Mr. Philp, and looked pleadingly into his face.

"It may injure you, Nelly, and that would grieve Tim."

"Och! shure, now, it'll be my greatest pleasure to nurse him, and I'll mind *all* the docthor says. Tim, darlint, *wouldn't* ye like to have me nurse ye, mavourneen?"

"Yes, shure, I would," said Tim, and closed his eyes.

Mr. Philp went for the doctor; he pronounced Tim's disease to be the prevailing fever, and ordered nourishing food and *wine*. Nelly opened her blue eyes very widely, and Mr. Philp said, "Will you order something else than wine, sir; there is a good deal of mischief done in this family already through the drink, and my young friend here, who has been a Band of Hope boy many years, hates everything that can intoxicate as he hates sin and Satan, and he has only too good reason to do so."

"I will see what I can do, then; but we are accustomed to trust very much in cases of this kind to the action of stimulants; the system has been poisoned by want of proper ventilation, impure air, and bad water; I would give him an order to a fever hospital, but I know they are all full; this scorching weather brings in patients by scores."

For three weeks Tim was confined to his bed, and

Nelly was his devoted and most clever little nurse. Mr. Philp sat up with him at night, and one or two of the other clerks at the counting-house took their turn, so as to relieve the good teacher a little; they all loved light-hearted, merry, witty Tim. Mr. Knight often visited him, and provided the many luxuries that were otherwise unattainable; he insisted that Tim's salary should be continued to him in full, and in all this kindness Mr. Christie warmly seconded his partner. Minnie and Geraldine with their own fair hands made many a choice delicacy to tempt his appetite, and Minnie also gathered and tied up lovely bunches of roses and gay autumn flowers from her beautiful garden beside the sparkling river, to brighten his sick room; they chose entertaining books for Nelly to read to him, to beguile the monotony of sickness, and Tim was very grateful for all these kindnesses, and sent pleasant messages full of witty compliments to the young ladies.

"Och, shure now, yer honour," he said smiling to Mr. Philp, "and will ye tell them it's Tim Maloney would like always to be ill, and have such beautiful presents, if it hadn't been that I will not have the sight of their sweet faces until I am well again, and their lovely faces are better than even the flowers Miss Christie sends me; and the pretty 'thrifles,' I'm sure I don't think it is a 'thrifle' though, at all at all."

The spoon in Tim's hand was busily at work as he spoke, with a saucer full of the condiment he named.

But, alas! for Tim, there was a very dark side to this pleasant picture, and it weighed sadly upon his young heart; the mother who had given him birth seemed not

to possess any sympathy with the suffering and the languor of her young son.

Poor Biddy Simmons, now restored to comparative health, tottered in to see him as soon as ever she could trust her strength so far; and most of the neighbours showed a very kindly interest in the recovery of Tim, who was most justly popular amongst them; but Ellen Maloney——

One day, after the fever had left Tim, and he was only suffering from extreme weakness and exhaustion, Nelly said to him, "Tim darlint, can ye bear something dreadful?" and then she bowed her head on the pillow beside her brother and burst into tears.

"What will the mather be, Nelly darlint? tell me, tell me;" he stroked the child's fair hair.

"O Tim, I couldn't help it, and I *did* thry to make her lave off doing it."

"What has the mother been doing, Nelly?" Tim asked in a low, sad tone.

"O Tim, your desk, and your books, a many of them, and your little watch, and the chain, and the breastpin that Miss Geraldine and Miss Minnie giv'd to ye."

"What! has mother taken them, and made away with them?" Tim's tone grew angry. "When, Nelly, when?"

"Och, thin, ye mustn't excite yerself, darlint, for shure I tried to prevint it all, but she said ye could spare her a thing or two."

Tim was very weak; the angry flush died away from his thin, worn young face; he turned from Nelly and hid himself beneath the bed-clothes; there were choking sobs, that rent the heart of his little sister.

"Och, thin, mavourneen, I 'll be angry wid meself for iver if ye'll cry like that about it! Och, Tim, don't ye cry, don't ye cry!"

Tim raised himself on his pillow, he closed his eyes, but his lips were set firmly. At that moment the door opened and Ellen Maloney entered; she was half drunk and in high spirits, her loud noisy words and boisterous laughter almost maddened her son.

"How do ye find yourself the day, Tim?" she asked, resting against the chest of drawers as she spoke; "and what will the kind friends bring ye, I'm thinkin'."

"They'll not bring me so much as my mother takes away from me," said Tim, glancing at her passionately, and then turned his face again to the wall.

Ellen Maloney laughed, and seemed about to leave the room. "What a miser ye'll grow, Tim, not to let your poor mother have a share of your good things," she said.

"Mother," said Tim, and he faced towards her again, and raised himself on his elbow—"mother, it's the old story over and over—ye don't care what becomes of us, so long as ye have yer gin and yer whisky; mother, listen to me"—the dissolute, wretched woman halted on the threshold—"if the things had done ye any good, mother, if ye had grown wiser or better for taking them and getting money on them, I 'd not have been the son to say ye nay; but mother, mother, God only knows if I 'll get well again, and sometimes these throubles seem almost to kill me right out; and I warn ye on my sick bed to-day, I warn ye that the dhrink is destroying ye body and soul; and oh! mother, I don't want heaven to be empty of ye; what will ye do, mother, when ye

come to die, and know that no drunkard shall inherit the kingdom?"

"What will I do, Tim? shure, I'll make a good confession, and get ye to take my soul out of purgatory;" she laughed, but it was a very forlorn laugh.

"Mother! mother!" cried Tim again, and his face was flushed with excitement, "have ye any love for me, or for darlint Nelly here, or for the little blind Kitty, have ye any love or mercy at all at all?"

"I can't stay now, Tim; ye shouldn't scold your mother."

"Scold!" Tim exclaimed, as he sank back in despair—"scold! have I scolded her? have I done anything but faithfully warn her? O my God! what have I done to deserve such a mother?"

Nelly's soft arms were folded around his neck. "Tim darlint, does God like us to spake like that?" she said, "shure and haven't we had better than we deserve all our lives long? and He has chosen the cross."

Nelly's eyes were turned upwards to the little patch of bright blue sky that was visible from the open window, "And we'll be afther forgetting the cross when we see the golden crown, won't we, Tim?"

Tim looked at her and drew her close to him. "Nelly mavourneen," he said, "it's not bearing the cross all the time while I have such a darlint little sister."

From that hour Tim bore his losses patiently, but he asked Nelly to lock away all the small things that could be secreted and carried off in his mother's pocket, and to keep the key in her own. He half dreaded to receive the packets of interesting books lent to him, from fear

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she might even appropriate the goods of strangers in order to supply her insatiable appetite.

What a new view of life a long illness gives to us; how solemnly near eternity looks; how responsible we feel for that blessing of health which, when it was our own, we valued so lightly; and how much older we grow in mind during those long thoughtful hours when we are compelled, by utter want of physical strength, to lie still and do nothing but think. Tim's brain was very busy; *too* busy, his kind doctor often said when he sat beside him and heard his intelligent questions on the great mysteries of life and death that were now occupying his mind. The doctor, like all others who knew Tim, had taken a great interest in him: his modest manner, his fresh, playful temper, mingled with his exceeding intelligence, rendered him as he became convalescent a most delightful companion, and Dr. Jordan often laughed as he rose to go after a longer chat than usual, and declared Tim sadly tempted him to neglect his duty to his other patients.

"Then I'll hould my tongue, yer honour, next time," said Tim, with his bright smile and merry twinkle. "It will niver be said of Tim Maloney that he tempted the docthor to forget his duty."

September brought cooler days and glorious moonlight nights. Tim rallied, and sat up part of each day in his comfortable arm-chair—*lent*, not *given* to him, by prudent Mr. Knight. One day, as he thus sat, Dr. Jordan came.

"Now, Tim, my dear lad," said the kind old gentleman, as he felt his pulse, "a glass of port a day for one month, and you'll be at business again. I know you're

a teetotaller," he added, as Tim's bright glance faded; "but you're not an obstinate fellow, and it is your *duty* to take what I recommend. Don't you see that?"

"Och, faith now, don't ye be angry with Tim! I'll do *anything* else, for I like ye *so* much, and ye've been as kind to me as if I had had a thousand pounds to pay wid; but *don't* ask me to break my pledge. Dr. Jordan, don't ye know that I've a drunken mother?"

"Yes, Tim."

"And her father was a drunkard afore her, and killed himself, as she is doing. Och, yer honour, maybe it runs in the blood like freckles, and I'll not be the one to thry. I'm afraid! I'm afraid!"

"I don't know what else there is in the whole pharmacopœia that would do as well, and as quickly set you up."

"Och hone! but I'm shure it's not the Lord's will that I put the tempter into my mouth, when He said, 'Get thee hence, Satan!'"

"Medicine, medicine, Tim!"

"'A wolf in shape's clothing,' yer honour; I don't trust him at all at all."

Dr. Jordan laughed, and rose to go. "Very well, lad; I'll see what I can do for you without it."

And Tim recovered.

CHAPTER XX.

THE DISCOVERY.

THERE was a knock at Mr. Knight's study-door one morning, as he sat busy over his papers.

"Yes; come in."

"Please, sir, Mrs. Maloney wants to speak to you."

"Very well, Ann."

Ann retreated.

"Will you go and speak to poor Mrs. Maloney, Geraldine? I am busy with some calculations just now. Tell her Tim must not think of returning to work until he is quite strong enough; his place will always be ready for him."

"Yes, uncle."

Geraldine arose from the low chair in which she had been sitting in her uncle's study to con her German lesson for her master. Miss Knight had ceased to teach foreign languages to her young pupil, in order that she might attain from natives that perfection of accent and pronunciation which an Englishwoman, however profi-

cient a linguist, cannot impart. Over the stairs and down into the hall—it was but the work of a minute—and Geraldine, the picture of life and beauty, stood before the haggard victim of the gin-bottle.

"What a miserable-looking creature Ellen Maloney is!" This was the thought that crossed the young girl's mind as she stood before her. Tim's mother sat on one of the hall chairs, her head bent, moodily waiting for the appearance of Mr. Knight. Her unkempt, lanky, reddish hair fell untidily over her sodden face; her really good features were spoiled by the miserable hue of her unhealthy complexion; and her dirtiness, the old drab train and the black jacket she wore were ragged and greasy, and her bonnet a tawdry exportation from some old clothes shop.

"Mr. Knight sent me to ask you what you wished to speak about," said the young girl; "and to assure you Tim will be all right in the counting-house as soon as ever he is well, and that he must not go to work too soon."

The gentle, pleasant voice aroused her. She lifted up her head—gazed with her bleared blue eyes into Geraldine's face: then she trembled all over. What was the matter? The young girl thought perhaps the mother's gratitude for her uncle's kindness to Tim was too great for words, and had moved her heart. But there suddenly came into the woman's eyes a strange, wild look of wonder and amazement. Then a dreamy expression passed over her features. She saw in Geraldine the image of a gay girl far away in the old home beside Killarney waters: a young wife busy in the little home-

stead — a proud young mother caressing her first-born. Then suddenly, with a cry, she started to her feet :

"Ah, cushla darlint, have I found ye at last? Shure, and it's me own child that's been lost this many a year, and me in ignorance intirely ! Och, shure, if I *had* but a dhrap of the craythur, for I'm failing for want of it ! Come near, cushla ; ye're niver afraid of your mother, mavourneen ! And it's I that'll swear to ye, by a pretty little mole in your arm."

She tried to catch Geraldine in her outspread arms. The affrighted girl thought she was mad, and ran screaming into the dining-room. But Ellen Maloney followed her. Suddenly she stopped in the wild chase, drew herself up with dignity, and said plaintively,—

"Ye cannot belave I'm your mother, darlint ; and no wonder. But I'll give ye proof. And ye're sorry I am your mother at all at all ! Och, thin, I've lived too long if me Geraldine is ashamed of me ! "

At this moment Mr. Knight entered the room. He had heard his darling's scream, and rushed at once to her assistance. He found her sobbing hysterically, and leaning against the mantelpiece for support ; while Ellen Maloney stood at a short distance, sobbing too, and wringing her hands. A terrible suspicion of the dreadful truth flashed into Mr. Knight's brain. Tim certainly bore some likeness to Geraldine ; and the colour and wave of Ellen Maloney's hair, that now fell around her poor, dissipated-looking face—the features of that face itself—the Irish name Geraldine,—all confirmed his worst fears. But he shuddered involuntarily at the thought of such a relationship between the two beings before him : one so bright, so

pure, so innocent, so beautiful; the other so degraded, so vile, so polluted, so *un*fair. He went to Geraldine, caught the frightened girl in his arms, and kissed her fair young brow as he whispered,—

"Do not fear anything, my child; I will take care all is rightly arranged."

Geraldine's sobs grew less frequent; but Ellen Maloney wept more loudly.

"Och, yer honour," she almost shrieked, "ye'll be afther taking me up for disturbing the pace! But it's I that am overcome wid the turn of affairs. Will ye have the goodness to listen to me story?"

"Certainly."

"It's now, yer honour—och, mercy on me, blessed Virgin! me memory seems all clane gone!—it must be near thirteen years since I lost my little one, and I've niver ceased to mourn her blessed memory. Do ye not call the beautiful darlint there Geraldine?"

"We do, because that is her name," replied Mr. Knight, folding Geraldine a little more tightly in his fatherly embrace.

"Och, hone, thin, it's strange if everything comes right, and yet I would be mistaken! But I *can't* be, yer honour. Will yer honour allow me to look at the little beauty-spot, just below her right wrist! Shure, now, if that isn't there, I needn't trouble yer honour any further."

Geraldine eagerly unfastened the cuff of her sleeve, and pushed it a little way up her arm. The little mark *was* there, faint indeed, but visible. With a cry of disappointment, she hid her face, weeping again, on Mr Knight's shoulder.

"Go on, Mrs. Maloney," said the merchant, with a strange feeling of misery at his heart.

"Ye belave now I'm spaking truth, yer honour?" said Ellen Maloney. "Och, shure, and it's a terrible thing to find a child afther thirteen years of mourning, and thin have her fretting herself intirely because she has found her mother! She loves riches, and greatness, and a beautiful home, more than the mother that bore her in pain and suffering, and nursed her at her breast, and loved her if iver a child was loved. And thin not a kiss nor a kind word, but she turns her pretty head to weep on a stranger's bosom! Ah me! och hone! that iver I've lived to see the day when me child turned away from me, and would not own me because I was poor and miserable!"

"It's *not* that, uncle," whispered Geraldine, "it's *not* that. Oh, God above knows I would not mind that!—but a drunken, wicked mother!" And she cried and sobbed more bitterly than before.

"Mrs. Maloney," said Mr. Knight, in a kind tone, yet with some amount of sternness, "when you prove yourself worthy the love of a pure-minded daughter, then, and not till then, can I allow you, in this house, to blame Geraldine so bitterly. In the first place, all these statements of yours must be well looked into before we feel quite sure you are related to my darling child, as you say you are; in the second place, though if you *do* prove her to be your child I shall have no control over her, yet I think you will wrong both her and myself if, after all these years, you do not permit me to retain her in my home; and, in the third place, it is unkind to

accuse her of an improper feeling towards you, when you must allow there is so little in your appearance and life to inspire the love and respect due from a child to a mother. It is not poverty nor trouble that separates you so widely from Geraldine. It is the gin and whisky that have destroyed your beauty, weakened your power to please—in short, ruined you. If you would regain the love you have lost, it must be by self-denial and reformation."

"Och, yer honour, and if ye had gazed upon me in the lovely old home beside Killarney, ye would not have thought me ugly and unlovable thin! But she's more beautiful even than I was, though as like as two mornings of summer."

There was a strange mixture of womanly vanity and justifiable motherly pride in her words, as she pointed to Geraldine; and Mr. Knight felt this, as he answered,—

"I can believe you; but is it not terrible to you to feel what a gulf your accursed habit has placed between her beauty and your—"

He waved his hand towards the mirror, opposite which she now stood; for she had advanced nearer to Geraldine. They were all reflected there. The bright maiden, with her floating, waving hair, and her lovely face still pale, her lips still quivering, and her light form still clasped in her guardian's arms; the merchant, grave and kind; and the wretched mother, in the sad livery of sin, with guilt and disease written on every feature. Ellen Maloney raised her eyes; then dropped them instantly, and buried her face in her hands, while she wept silently. All boasting was gone—all pride was gone; the mother's

pure nature, hidden under thick folds of sensuality and vice, was reached now. The large drops coursed each other over the poor unwashen fingers, and down into her lap; and Geraldine, peeping at her curiously over Mr. Knight's shoulder, watched her for some time without a word, her bosom heaving, and her own eyes filling again in sympathy. The merchant did not speak; he was well contented to let the mother and child rest in wiser hands than his own. Still the tears fell fast from the penitent mother's eyes. Still Geraldine hesitated: but her arms relaxed their tight grasp around Mr. Knight; her gaze was still riveted upon that weeping woman. At last she could bear it no longer. She sprang from his side to that of Ellen Maloney—she laid her hand upon the bowed shoulder:

"Mother mavourneen!"

Then the bent head was raised. A wondrous change of expression came over that wretched face: a holy light shone once more in the blue eyes, and mother and child were in each other's arms.

"And och, shure! me darlint, I'll turn from me wicked ways to plase ye, and I'll become a new craythur intirely. I'll give up the cursed dhrink, and we'll all be so happy togither; shure now, and what will Tim and the fayther say to it all; och hone! but I'm nigh spent, and will ye be afther giving me a dhrink of wather to refresh me."

"Stay there, mother, and I will fetch you something," said Geraldine, hastening from the room; she returned with a cup of coffee almost instantly, for breakfast was not long over, and handed it to Ellen Maloney; she

drank eagerly, and then said, with a piteous smile, "I'm not fit to stand in such a beautiful room; but it's I that will reform, now that I have my Geraldine again."

"You must not disappoint us, Mrs. Maloney," said Mr. Knight; "and though I feel perfectly convinced that you *are* the mother of my darling, I should like you to come with your husband to my counting-house to-morrow, and bring all particulars of her birth, and relate to me the circumstances under which you lost her; and then I hope we shall make some arrangement agreeable to us all, and that you will at least allow her to live *most* of her time with me."

"Och, yer honour, it's the good of the darlint herself we'll be afther thinkin' about, and shure it's kindness upon kindness we have to thank ye for."

"And Tim is my brother," said Geraldine, musingly; "give my love to him, mother, and tell him I am very glad of it."

Geraldine spoke honestly; her admiration and affection for Tim were almost sisterly, before she knew or guessed of the relationship existing between them. Indeed, from the first time she had seen him as a beggar at uncle Knight's door, her interest in him had been curiously strong; or was it nature, marvellously displaying her power of attraction between two beings so intimately connected?

"And little Nelly, too, dear little Nelly, I shall like to have her for my sister."

"I would rather lave ye now, darlint," said Ellen Maloney; "me poor head is in confusion, and I hardly know where I am, or what I came for; I'll be thinkin'

it all over till I see ye agin, and will not fail yer honour at yer office to-morrow, the husband and me; Timothy will be overjoyed."

So they shook hands, and Ellen Maloney went out into the street again full of her wondrous joy, but not before Geraldine had slipped half a sovereign into her hand to buy things for brother Tim and little Nelly. Poor Geraldine! how little she guessed the temptation that money would be to her wretched mother; she thought the happiness of that morning would be excitement enough for many a long day; but it was many weeks since a gold piece had lain in the drunkard's hand, and it opened the doors of every gin-shop in the metropolis to her. She passed one with a great restraint upon her inclinations, and a second, and a third, and a fourth; oh! why are they planted so closely to meet the eyes of the poor creature, whose self-control has been weakened by months or years of indulgence; the fifth was an old haunt, and outside it was an old acquaintance.

"I am glad to see you, Nell; have you a penny to lend an old pal?"

Ellen Maloney passed her with a nod; the other called after her, "You're too proud, are you, to speak to a friend?"

"No, Polly, but I'm in haste the morn."

"All nonsense; what's your business?"

"I've found me Geraldine, me lost child, and I must be afther telling the ones at home."

"No! you don't say so? Come, Nell, come, do tell what's happened. How did you find her? where? oh, I *should* like to hear all particulars; just come in, and

we'll only have a pint between us, and be off again."

Ellen Maloney hesitated, thought of Tim, and advanced a step homewards; thought of the beautiful girl who had that morning called her "mother," and advanced another; but the craving of appetite was terribly strong, and the woman called to her again, "Don't be so unfriendly, Nell; come and tell me all about it; am I not old friend enough to hear good news?" She turned back, the die was cast, and alas! for Geraldine's gold piece. For two whole days and nights Tim awaited in vain the coming of his mother; for two days Mr. Knight watched at the office for the visit of the Maloneys, and left messages with Mr. Philp if they called during his absence; for two days Geraldine wondered and troubled at the strange disappearance of her new-found parent; for two days, as long as the money lasted, Ellen Maloney drowned motherhood and womanhood, affection and duty, in gin!

CHAPTER XXI.

BROTHER AND SISTERS.

ON the third day after Ellen Maloney's visit to Woburn Square, Mr. Knight set out for Tim's home in Tyler's Court. He ascended the crazy staircase, knocked at the door of his young clerk's room, and was at once admitted by Nelly. Tim sat by the open window; he had been reading a book to Nelly, who had seated herself beside him with her work, and little blind Kitty was on the floor at their feet; they all welcomed Mr. Knight very heartily.

"Where is your mother, Tim?" asked the gentleman.

"She's on the spree, I'm thinkin', yer honour," he replied sadly; "Biddy Simmons tould me she saw her reel out of one public-house and go into another; we've not had her at home for two days and two nights."

"She called upon me on Tuesday," said Mr. Knight; "but I really don't know what was the reason of her coming, for something that she told me made me forget almost everything else. Did you send her, Tim?"

"Och no, yer honour, I haven't sent her to ye, for I

have been hoping to come myself to work ivery day, only it's the weakness in me legs, that I'll not be able to manage; it's a long time, and me to have me money for doing nothing," and Tim sighed.

"Tim, don't you know me too well to talk in that way?" asked Mr. Knight, gently. "I must forbid you to come for another week; but I have a strange story to tell you, that I thought your mother would have made you acquainted with before. Have you ever thought that Geraldine and you were something alike? only she is much handsomer; you will not mind my saying so, Tim —you are not vain."

Tim smiled merrily, and then looked strangely and wistfully into his employer's eyes. "What *do* you mean, sir; Miss Geraldine isn't—no, no, she *can't* be—my long-lost little—" he paused.

"Yes, Tim, your long-lost sister; I think your mother's words, and many other slight circumstances, prove it almost beyond a doubt."

"My sister," Tim said softly; "*she*, such a lady, so clever, so high up above us all, my sister; my sister Geraldine, that we thought should never come back to us again, for ever and ever."

Nelly was listening intently, her eyes wide open and fixed upon Tim, her lips parted, her whole face expressive of extreme wonder and surprise.

"What is it, Tim?" she whispered at last, when no one took any notice of her movements.

"Miss Geraldine's our sister, Nelly; the little sister that was lost, as I tould ye; will ye not be glad to have a grand, beautiful sister like that, darlint?"

Perhaps it was very natural that the heart which almost idolized Tim should feel a pang of jealousy at that moment. She turned her eyes from her brother, hid her face in her hands, and burst into tears.

"What's the matter, Nelly?" said Tim, drawing her towards him. Nelly could not be selfish long. This gentle Christian child tried very hard, day by day, to live more like the great Master who loved her and died for her, and whose glorious presence she felt very near to her in that poor and dingy home; so she only threw her arms around Tim's neck, and, still whispering, said,—

"Ye will not love *me* any the less, Tim darlint, because ye have a beautiful sister grown up?"

"Less! Nelly. Och, thin, mavourneen, why should I? Haven't I room in my heart to love both of ye dearly?"

Nelly smiled.

"I hope it will add to the happiness of all you young people, at any rate," said Mr. Knight.

Just then there was a noise of a man's footsteps ascending the old stairs, and Tim asked, "Is that fayther, Nelly?"

"I think so," she replied.

"I should like to speak to him, then," said Mr. Knight; so Nelly went into the outer room to see.

"Fayther," she said to the rough, dirty-looking man, who was seeking his pipe in the otherwise empty cupboard, "Tim's masther is here, and wants to spake to ye about somethin'."

"Let him come to me, if he is afther wanting me," said Timothy Maloney, with an oath, and very uncivilly.

"He's *such* a good gintleman," said little Nelly.

"They're all good, all these cursed Englishmen, when they're afther wantin' somethin' out of ye. Grind down the Irish; keep down Pat, that's what they all like to do, if they don't say so. Ye know nothin' about them, little Nell."

"I'll tell Mr. Knight, fayther, that ye're in here, and he can spake to ye, if he wants."

Nelly was gone. "Fayther's rather cross, yer honour," she added, after delivering her ungracious message; but Mr. Knight did not seem to mind, and followed her in at once to the other room. Nelly put forward a chair she had carried for his use from Tim's apartment, and then retreated to her brother's side.

"You lost a little girl about thirteen years ago in the streets of London, I think?" said Mr. Knight to the Irishman, as he still stood, moodily enough, between the empty cupboard and the mantel-shelf.

Timothy held a dirty pipe in his hand, and he made a movement as if to shake out the ashes from it, before he replied, "Shure an' I did; an' what of that?"

"I believe that your long-lost daughter is at present residing in my house, as my adopted child; at all events, I have a very sweet young girl in my family, whom I found as a little baby-child of about three years, one cold winter's day, nearly thirteen years ago, and she called herself then, as we have called her ever since, *Geraldine*."

"Shure, an' that was her name, the darlint," said the Irishman, with a sudden, eager glance of attention; "and how did ye find it all out, yer honour?"

His tone had changed from rudeness to civility.

Mr. Knight marked the alteration, and answered,—

"Two days ago, your wife called at my house, and seeing Geraldine, she recognized her: how, I cannot tell; except that perhaps she recalled her own appearance in past years. However, she gave me some proof, and promised me more; besides which, the child's age, complexion, the date at which you lost her, her name, and many other circumstances, seem to corroborate the truth of your wife's belief."

"An' where is me Ellen; shure, why wasn't she afther tellin' me of it at once, and I Geraldine's own faythe r?"

"Tim has not seen her since she came to me," answered Mr. Knight, sadly; "I fear she was led to drink to the health of her long-lost child on the way home. I think it would be well for you to come with me, and see Geraldine."

"I've no clothes at all at all, yer honour. I'll not be showin' and displayin' me poverty and me dirtiness to me own child, and she a young lady."

"It is right she should see her father," said Mr. Knight. "Excuse me, but have you any better suit in pawn? she knows by her mother's appearance that you have difficulties; she is anxious to make the acquaintance of you all. Had it not been for the fever, I should have brought her with me this morning."

"An' ye have brought her up a young lady?" questioned Timothy Maloney.

"I have given her a very good education, and her manners would grace any drawing-room; but she is good and true, and will, I have no doubt, seek to do her duty in any circumstances in which she may be placed."

"It's meself that niver meant to thank an Englishman for a kindness," said Timothy Maloney; "but I *do* thank yer honour for all ye've done for my girl; but I'm thinkin' she'll find it a sore change to come into the noise and throuble of such a place as this, afther the aisy life ye have led her, and yer honour's grand house."

"She need *not* come," said Mr. Knight; "unless you refuse the offer that I now make to you. I am extremely fond of Geraldine; she has been to me as a daughter for thirteen years; but I know that, without your full and free consent, I have no right to keep her with me after you have established your claim to her; but if you do consent to my adopting her fully and entirely, I promise to complete her education, and to settle upon her —on her becoming of age, or on her marriage, whichever may happen first—an income of one hundred a-year. She shall have my free consent to hold intercourse with her family at any suitable time; but of course there must be no interference in regard to any plans concerning her I may think fit to adopt."

Timothy Maloney eagerly watched Mr. Knight as he spoke, interrupting now and then with, "Ah, shure, yer honour!" "Now, thin, that's raal ginerous!" and when he had finished, he exclaimed eagerly,—

"An' a fayther that had no money at all at all, and no place to put a beautiful girl into, would be a mane spalpeen, and a madman too, not to accept yer honour's offer; and that same I do, intirely," added the Irishman, heartily; "and a ginerous offer it is, and I'll say that for ye. And did ye make it to Ellen?"

"No. I bid Mrs. Maloney ask you to accompany

her to my counting-house, that we might talk over matters together. As neither of you came, I feared something was wrong, and determined to call and see Tim, and have the matter explained. When you have had an interview with Geraldine, and we feel fully satisfied, I will have a paper drawn up by a lawyer, and signed by all of us, of which we shall each keep a copy, binding me to my promise, and you to your agreement; then there will be no doubt or difficulty on the matter. You will manage to see your daughter within a day or two, will you not?" concluded Mr. Knight.

"Would I be afther calling on the Sunday?"

"Any day," replied the merchant.

"I'll tell yer honour me difficulty," said the Irishman. "If I just manage to keep from the whisky on Saturday night, I'll have the money for the garmints, and look tidy and dacent when she sees me first."

"Pray do so," said Mr. Knight, kindly; "your daughter and I are very earnest teetotallers; it would sadden her very much to know that the drink kept you from coming to see her."

"She will know that Ellen dhrinks, will she?"

"Oh yes!"

There was an awkward pause.

"Poor Ellen," said the husband; "but she was a handsome girl in ould Ireland; an' ye would have said so, yer honour."

"I feel sure she must have been," replied Mr. Knight; "and I can see no reason," he added, smiling, "why—if you both bid adieu to whisky—you might not be a handsome couple again. You have some very good

children, Mr. Maloney—much to be thankful for. How nice it would be for you all if a new life was entered upon from this glad finding of your long-lost Geraldine."

Timothy Maloney listened eagerly, then he shook his head. "Too late at all at all," he answered, mournfully.

Soon afterwards Mr. Knight took his leave. At nightfall Ellen Maloney returned, assisted home by the policeman Squires, who, for Tim's sake, spared her the disgrace of being locked up. The following Sunday Timothy Maloney—looking neater and better than was to be expected after so many years of dissipation, and feeling very strange to himself in his clean-washed skin and tidy garments—called at Woburn Square to see Geraldine. Little Nelly accompanied him, and by her sweetness and tact destroyed all the awkwardness of the meeting. Our heroine came in from her class at the Sunday school to find her father and sister waiting for her in Mr. Knight's study. The Irishman rose as she entered, and stood for some minutes staring at her in utter bewilderment.

"Father!" said Geraldine, in her low musical voice. "Father, do you recognize me?"

He bowed his face upon his hands, and murmured, "It might have been me own Ellen upon her marriage morn."

After a few more days, the contract between Mr. Knight and the Maloneys was drawn up and signed; and Geraldine's worst fears were abandoned for a really pleasurable feeling. Now that she could stay with her

beloved Uncle Knight, and be regarded no less than formerly as his adopted child, she was able to feel glad of the intimate relationship which existed between Tim, and Nelly, and herself—of both of whom any right-minded sister might have been proud. The honest integrity of the one, the sweet purity of the other, were golden links which bound the heart of the impulsive Geraldine very firmly to her new-found treasures. She at once sought to make them profit by her knowledge. Nelly, it was planned, should come to her almost daily to read and to learn to paint flowers; and with Tim, as soon as ever he was well enough, she would enter upon a course of French and German—a scheme that greatly delighted our hero. Poor little Kitty was soon transferred—thanks to Mr. Knight's interest—to an institution for the blind, where her young life ceased to be a merely monotonous and weary succession of dark days; but budded forth with the pleasant fruits and flowers of careful instruction and busy moments. So passed away the early autumn of that eventful year; and between the brother and sisters there was firmly established a deep and abiding love. Tim returned to work again the last week in September; but his tall, gaunt form and white face made Messrs. Knight and Christie very anxious about him.

CHAPTER XXII.

EXCURSIONISING.

"THOSE are for you, Geraldine," said Mr. Knight, as he handed her three green little cases, each surrounded by an elastic band.

"For me, uncle? How kind of you! But what do they mean?"

She slipped the elastic from each in succession; they were precisely alike. All contained white tickets, or coupons, for an excursion to Paris.

"I am not going to Paris, am I?"

"It looks likely," said Mr. Knight, smiling.

"Paris! Oh, *dear* uncle, how kind of you!"

"Who would you like to give the others to? You will only want one packet yourself?"

"Tim, please. May I, uncle?"

"I thought so. Certainly you may. Indeed, I might as well tell you, my Geraldine, that it is as much on Tim's account as yours that I have planned this excursion. I want to try and set him up again; and I think it will do him more good, be a more thorough change for

him, to take him across the water, than merely to a watering-place on this side the Channel. But you have another case."

"May I say who I like, uncle?"

"Exactly."

"I should like either Nelly or Minnie to go; but I think dear little Nelly wants it most; she has nursed Tim so beautifully, uncle. Tim says he shall never know how to repay her; but he is sure her own health has suffered from it."

"I fear it has; and I am very glad you have chosen her, particularly as I think your friend Minnie has already received a present of a case of tickets from her papa, so she does not need another."

"O uncle, how delightful! What a pleasant party we shall be, shan't we? Is aunt going?"

"No; she says she doesn't like the water much. She is getting more stay-at-home than she used to be."

Tim and Nelly came to tea that evening; and it was a real treat to Mr. Knight's kind heart to see the intense delight with which they received the presents from their happy sister. Tim could not believe his good fortune.

"Och, shure, now thin, yer honour, and Geraldine, it's what niver came to me even in a dream, that I'd be floating over the wather to Paris, and seeing all the wonders by the way. Why, we'll be quite travelled aristocrats in Tyler's Court when we return, yer honour."

They all laughed merrily at Tim's joke.

"It will give you children a good opportunity of becoming thoroughly acquainted with each other," said Mr. Knight. "And, Tim, you must bring Nelly here all

ready for your journey early on Monday morning—we are off at eleven o'clock."

The appointed Monday was one of those golden autumn days in which summer seems to linger. The air was soft and balmy, and the sky intensely blue, with here and there a soft white cloud floating across its calm majestic beauty. The youthful party—with Mr. Knight—set out from Woburn Square in high good humour for London Bridge Railway Station, where they met Mr. Christie and Minnie—who was entrusted to Mr. Knight's care, with many parting injunctions and abrupt counsels.

"I hold you responsible for her safety, Knight. If you don't bring her home safe and sound, I'll never trust you again, mind."

"I shall do my best," laughed Mr. Knight. "Of that you may be very sure. And here is another esquire for Miss Minnie;" he pointed to Tim.

Tim's face grew very red. He certainly blushed to the roots of his hair, if not further; but he answered fluently and gallantly enough: "It's I that'll be proud to be of the least sarvice to Miss Christie." And Minnie, blushing too, tried to hide her confusion by kissing her father and bidding him a very loving good-bye; and then they all entered a first-class railway-carriage and were off. None of the young people had been very much of travellers, save for that long ago journey which had brought the Irish family from their old home to London, and even Tim's remembrance of that was very vague and misty; so Mr. Knight had plenty of employment to answer the many questions with which they overpowered him.

Newhaven was soon reached, and they were quickly on board the steamer for Dieppe; the sea was fortunately so calm that it was almost impossible to be ill, and none of our party suffered in the least from the frightful *mal de mer*. The hours spent on board were full of interest; it was intensely invigorating and inspiriting to have around them that broad expanse of blue, rolling water; to watch on the horizon the silvery sails of many an outward-bound vessel; to meet others gliding gently like birds over the waters towards the shore; to see the steamboats rushing through the waves with a loud noise like some impetuous sea-monsters. By-and-by, after some four hours' voyage, the coast-line of France became visible; it widened as they drew nearer, then the houses of Dieppe were in sight, and just as they approached the shore a flood of golden sunset light illumined every window with a wondrous radiance, and made a beautiful picture, that silenced for a moment the busy tongues of the young voyagers.

"Shure now," said Tim at length, "and that's in honour of yer arrival, Miss Minnie; the sun himself has got up a big illumination for ye."

Minnie laughed. "It's a most beautiful sight, isn't it, Geraldine?"

Geraldine nodded: she was looking at her little sister, who stood on one of the seats, her small hand held in that of Mr. Knight, and her sweet eyes radiant with an expression of holy joy.

"You like this, Nelly?" asked Mr. Knight.

"Like it, sir," repeated Nelly, coming back to earth again at the question; "oh! yer honour, an' isn't that just like heaven? 'pure gold,' yer honour, 'like unto

transparent glass:' I almost felt as if I was there; it's not wicked for me to say so?"

"Wicked? no, no, dear child; I wish we were all as able to transport ourselves even in thought 'across the river.' 'Blessed are the pure in heart,' little Nelly, 'for they shall see God.'"

"Oh! but, yer honour, I'm not pure at all at all," said Nelly, sighing; "an' if I get into heaven 'twill be just because Jesus will give me His own kind hand to lead me through the pearly gate into the city. Look there, yer honour."

The scene had changed, the western sky was radiant with golden and crimson and purple clouds, but the sun was fast sinking into the darkening waters of the mighty ocean, and the illumination had faded from the land before them, while in the east the crescent moon glided majestically into her throne,—vice-regent of the sun, to reign over the earth through the still hours of night.

They were now close at the pier, and the eyes of the travellers were intently fixed upon the tall crucifixes that stand one on each side. That night they were to sleep at Dieppe, and after a plentiful supper, with a bountiful supply of excellent fish, they found themselves too tired for anything but their comfortable beds. Next day they explored the narrow streets, the venerable castle, and the ancient church of this quaint old town, all full of historic interest to Geraldine and Minnie; they also had full opportunity to hear the eager volubility of the by no means handsome fish-wives in their strange dresses, and to inspect the very beautiful displays of ivory work for which Dieppe is so famous. Minnie chose for her

mamma a beautiful brooch formed of a group of exquisitely carved flowers; Geraldine bought for Tim a lovely little ship in full sail, and for Nelly a little white rosebud with its beautifully fashioned leaves, a gift that enchanted the child.

Next morning they continued their journey to Rouen, delighted with the lovely scenery by the way, the rows of quaint poplars, that Tim compared to Blue-Coat School boys, and little Nelly thought much more like "nate little charity school-girls with their big bonnets, all marching in procession to St. Paul's."

At Rouen everything delighted them, the bridges, the churches, the shops, the old-fashioned houses; the tall white caps of the women and little girls, giving to them a quaint but very cleanly appearance. Two days passed away only too quickly for the interested little party. On the second evening of their visit the bright moonlight tempted them to stay out somewhat late in the busy streets: the ancient spires and towers of the churches and the cathedral looked black and solemn in the silvery radiance around, and cast long shadows between the tall houses. To Geraldine and Minnie the city was full of the scenes of long-past times, when the heart of brave Cœur de Lion was entombed with much pomp in the noble cathedral, or when the heroic Joan of Arc met her death so bravely in the market-place.

They were all walking along in somewhat thoughtful mood, when they met a party of bacchanals who had just emerged from a wine-shop: the men shouted and gesticulated wildly, and little Nelly clung closer to Mr. Knight's hand.

"It's jist one pathern with what it is in England, yer honour," she said; "will they be afther getting gin and whisky here too? is there no place free?"

"Wine and brandy are the Frenchman's favourite drinks, Nelly," replied Mr. Knight.

"Mr. Knight," said Tim, coming forward with Minnie and Geraldine; "I thought people made a great boast that France is a very sober counthry, and that you hardly iver see a dhrunken man in France. We have only been a little space of three days, and there are five dhrunken men before us."

"I know people do say so; there is just this difference between England and France, Tim, that the people drink *less* than the English of the more alcoholic beverages, such as spirits and brandied wines, and are consequently somewhat less frequently drunk; but it is idle and most illogical to suppose that alcohol in *France* will not produce similar results to alcohol in *England*: the lighter, more buoyant, temperament of the French cannot ward off the natural consequences of the poison they swallow, though they may manifest different dispositions in their drunkenness."

The noisy revellers passed them as he spoke, dancing and singing with mad gaiety along the moonlit streets.

"Will there be any counthry where the dhrink is not used at all at all, yer honour?" asked Tim.

"There is scarcely one, Tim, in which people have not devised some means of intoxication; you will probably many times in your life hear a very specious argument brought forward against teetotalism, grounded on that very fact; indeed, before I was teetotally enlightened,

I myself have frequently used it against the scheme of total abstinence—namely, that the *universality* of intoxicants was a proof that they were necessary in some way to man's physical constitution; that they were, in fact, merely the legitimate supply of a natural want. I have since learned a very different lesson, learned that the popularity of any particular vice does *not* imply a Divine origin, that a purely temperate life is indeed a daily struggle against the inherent wickedness of man's nature; in short, that this almost universal manufacture and use of articles which produce intoxication is but another proof that man is a *fallen* creature."

They had now reached their hotel, and retired directly after supper, to be ready for the next day's important journey to the beautiful capital of France. Their road in the morning led them along the course of the Seine, which sparkled and glittered gloriously in the full blaze of sunshine. It divides and meanders around many pretty islets, and when it unites forms small lakes amidst the fertile valleys. The travellers had full occupation for their delighted gaze. Mr. Knight noted with pleasure that already the expression of weariness and languor had left the faces of Tim and Nelly. There was a bright healthy colour coming back to Tim's face; and though dear little Nelly looked very pale and fragile, as was her wont, her eyes sparkled with pleasure, and her whole countenance shone with animation. Geraldine and Minnie amused themselves with endeavouring to understand the speech of their fellow-travellers, and occasionally answered a remark addressed to them. Our heroine, as was natural, from her extreme and radiant beauty,

attracted much attention everywhere, and received the respectful but very officious homage of every young exquisite who happened to enter the carriage with them; but her pure simple manners perplexed them. She was still, in her own thought, almost a child. Nor was she in any hurry to leave behind the very pleasant petted life which she had led so long, in order to assume new responsibilities. Before they entered the Paris station, Mr. Knight pointed out to them the objects of interest which could be seen from the carriage windows. Amongst these was the beautiful "Arc de Triomphe," whose fair proportions and perfect symmetry delighted every eye. To little Nelly, it became one of the fair visions of her waking moments. The child had an artist's eye for the beautiful, little cultivated as this faculty had been. In the noble picture-galleries of the Louvre and Versailles she wandered for hours, forgetting all else but the wondrous beauties on the canvas before her: the battle-pictures wherein the fierce passions of man's nature were painted with such wondrous power, had a strange fascination for her, with their dead and wounded soldiers, and their dying horses, whose shrieks seemed to echo in Nelly's ears as she gazed. Rosa Bonheur's beautiful animals recalled the delightful country, which it was natural for Nelly to love so much better than the town.

"Och! the darlint! she'll never forget yer honour's kindness in bringing her here. 'Twill be a faste for her as long as she lives," exclaimed Tim, as his loving eyes followed his little sister.

One day Mr. Knight took the young people to Fontainebleau, where the grand old château delighted them;

nor were they less enchanted with the magnitude of the forest, in which they drove for hours without coming to the end of the tall trees, and where the air was cool under their shadow, however hot the sun might be outside.

"I niver knew there were so many trees in the whole world," said Nelly, innocently. "Tim darlint, don't ye mind the day we first went into the counthry, and I wondered how God could make all the flowers? Och, shure, mavourneen, but that's a little thing to all the mighty trees, with their monster roots, an' all. Shure, and yet He's never tired at all at all. The dear Lord 'doeth all things well.'"

Nelly leaned back in the carriage against her brother's enfolding arm, and was silent again; her simple faith, her loving adoration, gave them all enough to think about for many minutes.

There were other charms in Paris for little Nelly. These were the tasteful flower-markets, and here every morning, whatever else was in the programme for the day, Tim took his little sister to enjoy the fair sight of rare exotics, lovely geraniums, oleanders, heaths, roses, fuchsias, orange-blossoms, myrtles, in the sweetest profusion, and arranged with the most charming taste. The old flower-sellers, and their young assistants, grew accustomed at length to the sight of that "belle petite Anglaise," and her "beau jeune frère," who grew so wildly joyous over their flowers, and who chose each day the loveliest bouquets to carry away for Geraldine and Minnie. This was Nelly's mission from Mr. Knight; besides which, Tim had orders to supply to Nelly herself the bouquet

that she most admired. So this visit to Paris became to the child the happiest period of her brief life.

"I only wish I could keep them all, darlint, until we get back again," she said one day to Tim as they left the flower-market of the Madeleine. "Shure, Tyler's Court will be very smutty and dull afther the beautiful white Paris."

"Flowers *will* fade, Nelly mavourneen. We can't keep pleasures for iver."

"They won't fade in heaven, Tim, will they?"

"No, darlint."

Nelly's eyes were turned upwards to the bright sky above them. "Shan't ye be glad to be there, Tim?"

"Where, Nelly?"

"In heaven. I shall."

"Darlint, why do ye spake like this? do you want to lave me? I did not think that of ye, Nelly."

"But ye would come too, darlint; iverybody I love, I'll be afther wanting to come too. Oh, I wish mother was comin'."

Tim could not answer.

"On all the joy we have, Tim darlint, the shadow of her sin keeps falling—oh, it is *so* black. And when I am very happy, and Mr. Knight is goodest to me, and I forget for just a little, it comes back all the worse afther. Wouldn't it have been almost *too* nice, Tim darlint, but for that?"

"Maybe we'll get mother a good woman agin by-and-by, Nelly. I don't mane to leave off thryin'."

An angelic smile lighted up Nelly's face as she answered, "Let us thry *always*, Tim darlint."

They had reached the hotel, and found Mr. Knight,

Geraldine, and Minnie at the door waiting for them, and soon they were comfortably ensconced in a carriage and driving off to the Bois de Boulogne. Here dismissing it, they walked along under beautiful avenues of acacia and chestnut trees, lingered at the lake and by the cascade, and seated themselves here and there in calm enjoyment of the lovely scene. Before they left, it became a very gay one, for the long procession of carriages from Paris had brought out for their daily fashionable drive the costly-attired ladies, and gentlemen *à la mode*, who were surveyed with interest by the Maloneys and Minnie Christie; while the beautiful horses and splendid equipages received almost as much, and were *quite* as worthy, of their attention. Another morning was spent at Père la Chaise, wandering and meditating amongst the tombs, marking the tender and pretty sentiments entwined amongst the wreaths of "immortelles," and noting the beautiful and highly decorative chapels which enshrine some of the wealthy dead.

In visiting the manufactory of Sèvres china, all the girls were especially delighted with an exquisite portrait of Raphael on a porcelain slab—the lovely face, the soft tender eyes, the flowing hair, all answered to the ideal each had formed of the gentle and gifted Italian painter. The music they heard in the splendid cathedral of Notre Dame and the churches of the Madeleine and St. Roc, filled their souls with a transport of delight; and little Nelly would gaze on the rich flowers at the altars, and listen to the harmonies, unconscious of all else, while the rich light streamed through gloriously painted windows, and formed an aureola around her fair, young, drooping head.

At night, as they wandered along the Boulevards, amongst the cafés and wine-shops that in some places almost line the footway, with their small, round tables set in the open air, whereat the Parisians sit drinking and smoking, and idly enjoying the calm beauty of their lovely autumnal evenings, all the young folks were surprised to see how prevalent was the use of brandy and beer, as well as the Continental light wines, which they had formerly imagined to be almost the only intoxicating beverages consumed across the Channel. There were young workmen who ordered beer, and who, with their foaming pots before them, and their pipes in their mouths, looked very much like the London topers whom Tim and Nelly were only too much accustomed to see. There were gentlemen who poured their cognac from the long-necked black bottles into the little glasses placed beside their cups of coffee, and who drank at least as much of the stronger beverage as of the other. And there were angry disputations and fierce oaths, and foolish semi-idiotic laughter, and coarse comments on the passers-by, as the natural fruits of the poison that had entered the brains of these Frenchmen.

A fortnight passed away as if on wings, so interested had they been in the gay capital; and then the travellers turned their faces homewards, each full of new thoughts and new scenes, which the varied experiences of the past weeks had given them. A safe and pleasant journey brought them back to their respective homes in Putney, Woburn Square, and Tyler's Court, just as the bright beauty of the autumn began to fade, and dark days and cold frosts warned that winter drew on apace.

CHAPTER XXIII.

ANCHORED.

"THE *Geraldine* will be up the river to-day, darling; you may come with me, if you like, and go on board. What a long time it is since they left us."

Geraldine obeyed her uncle's summons very gladly; and yet she had a strange feeling of shyness, which mingled with the pleasure she naturally felt at seeing her old friends the Seymours and Fred Coleridge again; for life had changed to her, and she had almost grown into a woman since they left, two years and a half ago.

It was a dull, foggy morning, and people jostled together uncomfortably in the busy London streets, as Mr. Knight and Geraldine walked quickly along to Messrs. Knight and Christie's wharf. The *Geraldine* had just laid alongside, and cast anchor, and the whole scene to an outsider appeared one of the utmost confusion and intricate disorder: wharfingers pressed forward, eager to be employed in the unlading of the ship; the sailors ran hither and thither over her deck and along

her rigging; and Captain Seymour shouted orders to his crew. Mrs. Seymour and her three children—for a little baby boy had been born in Canton—stood waiting to come on shore; and beside them was a strange-looking Indian ayah, who had been hired to assist the captain's wife on the journey home. Fred was nowhere to be seen. Mr. Knight advanced with Geraldine, and, stepping on board, heartily shook hands with Mrs. Seymour, while Geraldine at once made friends with the little children. And while she held little Fanny by the hand, and Charlie stood beside them, chattering as quickly as he could speak to the "pretty lady," the second mate came up the cabin stairs and advanced towards the little group on deck. His complexion was much bronzed; his mouth and chin were covered with a short, curly brown beard; but it only needed one glance into the honest dark eyes to be assured that this was no other than Fred Coleridge. He greeted Mr. Knight affectionately, and then turned to Geraldine with a bright smile, while his gaze was fixed upon her sweet upturned face, and seemed almost to read her thoughts.

"Miss Geraldine! How beautiful you have grown," he exclaimed impulsively, and then coloured; while poor Geraldine, her face flushed crimson at the sailor-like outspokenness of the compliment, could not find words to speak, and never felt so foolish in her life. At length she stammered out, looking at the captain's wife,—

"I am very glad you have returned all safe and well; it has been such a long voyage."

"It has, indeed," said Mrs. Seymour. "Shall we go

into the cabin, Miss Geraldine? I think Fred here wants to show you something."

On the cabin table was a rich Indian shawl; and on it lay a necklace of small but very perfect pearls.

"Do you admire them, Miss Geraldine?" asked Fred, as the young girl looked at them with much admiration.

"How could I help it! They are very, very beautiful."

"Mrs. Seymour thought they would suit your taste, Miss Geraldine. I am *so* glad I hit upon the right things."

Fred spoke in a hearty, almost boyish manner. Geraldine hesitated. Surely the gifts were too precious for her to accept them. She turned to speak to Uncle Knight, but he had not followed them into the cabin, and was with the captain on deck.

"Fred Coleridge, you are very kind. I must ask my uncle about it first," she said, shyly.

"The difficulty was to get anything good enough to ask you to accept, Miss Geraldine," remarked Fred, pleasantly; and then he brought out various curiosities from his sea-chest to show her. He had brought for Mr. Knight a set of exquisitely carved Chinese chess-men; for Miss Knight an Indian silk-dress piece;—nor had he forgotten the little circle at Plymouth, that would, ere long, be so anxiously awaiting his return: there were dresses and shawls for his mother and sisters, and the model of a Chinese junk for his father.

"I think, if Fred had all the riches of the East for his own, he would manage to spend every gold piece in giving pleasure to others," said Mrs. Seymour affectionately, as she looked at Fred's bright face whilst he ex-

hibited his treasures to Geraldine. "There certainly never existed a more unselfish lad."

"If you tell me that so many times, I shall be obliged to believe it, Mrs. Seymour," laughed Fred; "and then my modesty will all disappear; and I shall be one of the most conceited, apish young men you can imagine. So, if you please, don't believe her, Miss Geraldine; but find some fault with me instead."

On deck Captain Seymour and Mr. Knight were busily conversing. After talking of the cargo and the voyage, the captain said,—

"You will be surprised to see, sir, that Fred Coleridge is promoted to be second mate; but I will at the earliest opportunity go into the whole matter with you, and then I think you will approve."

"I have no doubt of that, captain. But what has become of Furness?"

This was the name of the second mate of the *Geraldine* when she left England.

"Dead, sir."

There was a strange expression in the captain's eyes—almost of horror—that did not escape Mr. Knight.

"I see you have a long yarn to spin on that subject, captain. You must all dine with me to-day; and then we can have a good talk over matters."

Geraldine did not stay very long at the wharf, but carried off with her the captain's wife and children, and their dark nurse, to Woburn Square. A few hours later the captain and Fred Coleridge made their appearance with the merchant. And after dinner—when the little children were quietly amused by their ayah and Ann, in

Geraldine's old nursery, and when the grown-up folks were all seated round a bright fire in the cosy dining-room—Captain Seymour told the story of the second mate to Mr. Knight.

"He was a clever fellow, was Furness, and there was only one thing that stood between him and the wind—all else was in his favour; that one thing, sir, was a glass of grog: he couldn't resist it, and so, as I told him many and many a time when we had a turn on deck together, it was the best thing in the world for him that he had shipped himself on board a temperance ship. I pointed out our Fred to him," continued the captain, looking with a pleasant smile at the young sailor; "I advised him to sail in the same boat, and to steer for the same harbour; and sometimes he said he should try, and at others he laughed at the idea of being a temperance man. Fred and he were excellent friends, however, and agreed about everything but about the drink, and over it they had now and then a little bit of a breeze, but nothing to speak of, only what lads will have when they speak their minds out to each other. When we touched at the West Indies the other day, on our voyage home, for the cargo of fruit, Furness was in high spirits; he had an uncle in Jamaica, and this uncle had a beautiful daughter, with whom our young mate was more than half in love. She was a sort of half caste; her mother was an islander, but had been married to this Mr. Furness for many years; the family lived near Morant Bay, and as soon as ever we had anchored, my second mate asked leave for Fred and himself to go on shore. I granted it, and they went off in the smallest ship's boat to that part of the

shore nearest his uncle's plantation, where there was a small, fanciful sort of a private pier erected in connection with the grounds. You can tell the rest, Fred, better than I can," said the captain ; " go ahead, my boy."

" I would rather not, captain, if you will excuse me," said Fred Coleridge, very seriously, " I can't trust myself to tell it all through."

So the captain resumed his yarn : " The plantation was a very extensive one, and covered some beautiful slopes that overlooked the waters of the bay ; indeed, the path through it in one place wound round a sort of precipice or abrupt cliff, which looked so terrible as they walked along it, that Fred suggested to Furness it was a dangerous spot at nightfall, and he wondered it was not guarded in some way. 'Oh!' said he, 'planters don't trouble themselves very much, I suppose, if an old nigger does lose his head now and then.' He was in the best of tempers, full of this lovely girl—what was her name again ?"

" Rosabelle," replied Mrs. Seymour.

" Yes, Rosabelle," said the captain. " Well, after walking on for two or three miles from the landing-pier, and through the canes, they came to the house, a fine place—very white and shining it looked in the hot sun ; it had broad verandahs, and some beautiful trees at the back and on each side, and before it there swept down a smooth lawn, from which there were as fine views of the sea as you could imagine. I know it all, Mr. Knight, because I had occasion to go there once myself. A lot of creeping plants climbed over the verandah and the porches, and made a delicious perfume. As soon as they

came in sight of this lawn, they saw a large party of ladies and gentlemen amusing themselves on it in various ways, some at archery, some at croquet, or what they call it; and it was a beautiful sight, Fred says: all the young ladies wore white or very bright-coloured dresses, so that they looked almost like flowers scattered over the grass, and the gentlemen were dressed in cool summer costumes of gray or buff or white. A few were walking about through the grounds, and just as Fred and Furness had stopped to look at the merry scene, a young lady and gentleman advanced towards them through an avenue of limes; she was tall and slight and graceful looking, with a dark complexion, but still quite a beauty.—My dear," said the captain, turning to his wife, "you would make a better hand at describing her than I shall; just tell Miss Geraldine what she was like—young ladies always want to know about the heroines of the love stories," and the captain began to laugh, and then checked himself, as if he felt it would be a sorry thing to be merry over.

Mrs. Seymour said: "You are telling the story quite rightly, dear. This young lady, as I have heard her described, had that rich type of beauty which is only the lot of women who dwell in warm climates: she had a quantity of fine, soft, silky black hair, which was worn around her head in beautiful braids, while another part of it fell in curls over her shoulders; then her face was perfectly oval in shape, her features fine, and on either cheek was a sort of damask rose bloom; her eyes were bright, and flashing, and sparkling, or else soft, and melting, and tender, just as the feelings by which she was swayed for the moment dictated. This was Rosabelle Furness."

"Just before young Furness met his cousin," resumed the captain, "the two young men could see that she was interested very much in what her companion said to her; in nautical phrase, ladies, he had ported her helm, and it was easy to see he could bring her to say just what and how he pleased. Fred saw that Furness was in a tremendous passion, and pitied him very much; he had a hot temper, poor fellow, if ever a man had; he did not stop to think, but darted forward, and cried out, 'Rosabelle, Rosabelle, have you forgotten me and our vows?' The girl shrieked a little, and then fainted, or pretended to, I cannot say which, and fell into the arms of her new lover. He carried her into the house, Fred and Furness following; but when the young lady aroused herself and recovered, her fancy had changed, and she made much of the young mate, her cousin, and would have nothing to do with the son of the West Indian planter; so they had a walk together away in the plantation, or woods, or somewhere, and Fred joined in the games, and made himself, as he generally does," added the captain smiling, "a tremendous favourite with the ladies. After a while there was a grand supper announced; this day there had been what they call a fête champêtre on the grounds, and Furness led in Rosabelle, and sat beside her—the girl in her white dress, and her fine black hair plaited and adorned with scarlet coral and pearls. I have no doubt, Mr. Knight, she was enough to set a young man's head off, and make him forget everything but his happiness; so he made pretty speeches, and drank away freely at the wine, and afterwards at the rum, both of which were supplied in abundance; his

uncle had a great distillery at Kingston, and was one of the largest exporters of rum on the island. Fred, of course, kept from all of it, and was frightened to find, when they left to come on board, that Furness was very much intoxicated.—Fred, my lad, you must go ahead now; I've told all I can tell properly."

"I told Furness," said Fred Coleridge, "that he had better remain at his uncle's that night, and I would return alone to the ship and explain his absence to Captain Seymour; but this he refused to do, so we said good-bye to the ladies and gentlemen, and started. Night came on almost suddenly, as it does near the equator, before we had long left the house, and only the stars shone out in the gloom. I was terribly frightened, Mr. Knight, on Furness's account, when I thought of the abrupt cliff over which we had to pass; I asked him if there was not any other and better way to the pier, but he told me the path we were going was safe enough, and swore at me that I need not think he was drunk any more than myself; and a good deal more of that sort of thing, which I should like to forget if I could. By-and-by we could tell by the fresh sea breeze, and the greater light, that we were out of the plantation and skirting the cliff, and I begged Furness to take my arm, and let me feel our steppings before we advanced, but he refused me, sir."

"My dear Fred, it was well he did," said Mr. Knight, much touched.

"I am not sure; perhaps I might have saved him. Oh, sir, it is dreadful to think of. Well, we went on for about a dozen paces in safety, and I was congratulating

myself on our escape; another step, and I still heard Furness behind me; another. 'Are you there, Furness?' 'All right,' he said, in his drunken fashion; 'can't you believe a man that has a little rum in him is as good—' I heard him stumble, and as he fell, a loud shriek of despair, as if the shock had sobered him, ascended up towards me and towards the heavens above us, dark save for the glorious stars. I heard the terrible words, 'My God, I am lost;' and oh, sir, they are still sounding in my ears."

Fred paused, and his voice was choked, and his eyes were full of tears when he continued: "I heard his shrieks fainter and fainter as he fell down, down into the gloomy waves below, and then there was a low, dull splash in the water, and all was over—his soul was in eternity; and I had done nothing, could do nothing, to save him; sir, this thought almost maddened me. I rushed back as quickly as I could to the house, and told the dreadful story to the servants, who still hovered around the tent in which we had had supper; one of them led me to his master, to whom I repeated the frightful tale. He did not seem so horrified as I expected, and said, rather coolly, 'He was a rash young man, to attempt the walk to-night, and I advised him to stay here; he was as drunk as anything, and if he had had a grain of sense, would have known better than to attempt the higher road to the pier. You are sober, young man, but I advise you, if you must go to-night, to take the lower path; one of the niggers will show you the way.' I thanked him, and said I had no wish to try again the dangerous road over the cliff. 'But can nothing be done,

sir,' I asked, 'even to recover the body of your nephew?' 'Nothing, nothing,' said he; 'the fall, without the water at the bottom, is enough to kill any man, and the water is very deep in that pool; they call it the "Devil's Bath."' I returned to the ship, feeling very miserable, as you may think, sir; and next day the captain and I were both summoned up to the estate to furnish particulars of our voyage and of Furness's position on board the *Geraldine*, as they intended to set up a stone to his memory, whether his body was recovered or not. Mr. Furness also undertook to write home to England to his mother, who is a widow, and to the rest of his family."

"This case finished me and my obstinacy," said the captain; "I could not hold out any longer. Why, if our Fred had been a drinking sailor, there is every reason to believe Furness would not have gone down alone into the Devil's Bath. I suppose the poor lad's having had no drink for so long made it take the more effect upon him; but, however, I unloaded my rum and wine into the sea that night—no more 'captain's private allowance' for me—and Fanny signed the pledge with me in Fred's book next morning; and our little Charlie is a Band of Hope boy, Miss Geraldine; what do you think of that? 'Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not depart from it,' eh, Mr. Knight?"

"Quite true; that text should be the basis of all our Bands of Hope, and I think, with very few exceptions, it is," replied the merchant.

"After Furness's death," said the captain, "I made the best choice I could of a second mate to fill his place.

by appointing Fred Coleridge to his berth as a temporary arrangement. Watson is older, but not so much master of his profession; and old Sam would not take it—he can't pass examinations at his time of day, he says, and is content to remain where he is. So, as I tell Fred, his apprenticeship will expire before we put to sea again, and he must, of course, fit himself for his work by gaining his certificate; it will be for you and Mr. Christie to decide, sir, as to what capacity he shall sail in next time."

"I will consult Christie on the matter," replied the merchant.

"What became of Rosabelle Furness?" asked Geraldine.

"I don't think she really cared much for her cousin, Miss Geraldine," replied Fred; "she went into hysterics on the night of the accident, but before we left the island, a month later, she had taken her other lover into favour again, and seemed bright enough."

"How *could* she?" said Geraldine, warmly.

"All women are not true-hearted," replied the captain.

After this the conversation changed its subject, and Geraldine and Fred went up into Uncle Knight's study for a little music.

"Fred Coleridge," said our heroine, as she turned over her pieces to find his old favourites, "something has happened since you went away; indeed, only two months ago."

"Happened to *you*, Miss Geraldine," said Fred, rather anxiously, looking fixedly at her. Her beautiful face was working strangely, the lips quivered, the eyes fell, and

when she raised them again, and looked at Fred, they filled with tears.

"I am not a real lady, as you think me, Fred Coleridge," she said, impetuously. "I am the child of drunken parents—I am Tim's sister. I am glad I have told you," and Geraldine hid her blushing face amongst the pages of her music-books, turning them over with quick but trembling fingers. There was such a rush of joyful feeling into the heart of the young sailor, that for some minutes he could not speak. Geraldine, grieved and surprised at his silence, sat down and began to play. As he watched her, he thought he had never seen any one so lovely; she was dressed in a softly flowing robe of pale blue silk, her bright hair floated over her shoulders, and round her graceful throat she wore his gift of the morning—the necklace of fair pearls, which Uncle Knight had allowed her to accept; but now these were rivalled, as Fred saw to his consternation, by the fast-falling tears that chased each other down her cheeks, and Fred stopped her playing at once to ask her what was the matter, and in what he had offended her?

"Nothing," said Geraldine, and went on playing again.

"Will you forgive me, Miss Geraldine?" said Fred; "that what seems to make you sorry, makes me a little—no, I must speak the truth, a great deal glad. When you were Miss Geraldine Knight, a rich heiress, a great lady, and a great beauty too, I felt you so far away from me, as if I should hardly ever reach to you; now you are the beautiful sister of my dear friend, Tim Maloney, and I may call you, too, my friend."

"I was that before, *I* thought," said Geraldine, uncertain whether to laugh or to cry, and with an April mixture of tears and smiles on her sweet face.

"God bless you for saying so; but I can't help feeling as if all the icebergs had been removed that stood at the mouth of the harbour, and prevented my ship sailing in to her anchorage; but now that your parentage has been discovered, and you are Tim's sister, the ice melts, and I feel myself safely anchored at last, and that is *such* a blessing."

"What do you mean, Fred; what have I to do with your ship?" asked Geraldine, innocently, and looking very puzzled. "I don't understand you."

"I will explain one day very soon, Geraldine. Will you play for me? You may be quite sure of one thing—if I admired you years ago, when you were a rich little lady, I admire you a thousand times more now, when I know you to be Miss Geraldine Maloney."

Geraldine laughed: her sweet silvery laughter always told of the sunshine that reigned in her heart.

"I hardly know my own name yet, Fred Coleridge," she said—"it does not sound at all properly; so call me, as you used to do, 'Miss Geraldine.' You know I never would be called 'Miss Knight.'"

Just then Miss Knight herself entered the study with Mrs. Seymour, and the ladies took it in turns to play over their music. Then up came Mr. Knight and the captain; and Geraldine and Fred and Tim, who had also come to Woburn Square that evening, sang together some of the gay sea-songs which are so justly popular, while the captain swelled the chorus with his loud,

hearty, baritone voice. And then the Seymours and Fred and Tim left ; and Geraldine, tired with the adventures of the day, went to bed. But in her dreams, Fred Coleridge held her by a long chain of pearls, and she was diving in the Devil's Bath for the coral ornaments of the planter's beautiful daughter.

CHAPTER XXIV.

ONE ANGEL MORE.

ALMOST directly after their return from Paris, Tim rented another room, on the same landing as the other two, in the house in Tyler's Court, for his little Nelly. It was a very small apartment, and looked bare and dull enough till Tim's kind hands and loving heart wrought a transformation scene. But Nelly was delighted at the thought of having a little sanctum of her own, and entered very heartily into all Tim's plans for its improvement. He bought a cheap bright paper for the walls; purchased a small iron bedstead, with a tidy mattress and comfortable supply of bedding; and when he took Geraldine into his confidence, she came to Tyler's Court to see the room, and brought with her pink curtains for the small window, and the money to purchase a chest of drawers and a washing-stand, as her gifts to her little sister. So the room, when completed, was a very great success; and Nelly clapped her hands in childish glee, and looked as bright and cheerful as Tim had hoped to see her.

But not all their care for her could bring strength to the drooping powers, or add length of days to the life of that young child on whom Death had already set his seal. Just after the Christmas festivities—into which she had entered with much spirit, attending her sister's annual party in Woburn Square, and the Christmas tea-meeting of the Band of Hope children in Candlemas Alley, and going once to Putney with Tim to a merry-making at Mr. Christie's—she became so much weaker that she was almost confined to the house, and to her pretty little room. But even here, amongst her books and flowers, and with her painting before her, she was, as she said, "very happy," and no fear of death came to shroud the innocent cheerfulness of her manner. When there was a bright day now and then in that dull, cold month of January, Geraldine drove into Tyler's Court, by Mr. Knight's direction, to take her little sister for a drive into one of the parks. Once or twice Nelly begged to go instead to Westminster Abbey to hear the anthem; and with reverent, upturned face, the child—already, as Geraldine fancied when she looked at her, "almost an angel"—listened in rapt delight, and dreamed her soul in paradise.

After a little while she became too weak even for these enjoyments, and sat most of the day in the small arm-chair Mr. Knight had given to her, wrapped in a warm little dressing-gown of pink flannel that Miss Knight had had made for her, and reading the Bible or her little hymn-book, or silently musing, with a calm, sweet expression of peace on her wan young face. Geraldine was a great deal with her little sister, and

they had many loving talks together; the elder girl feeling herself the better and purer in thought and heart for every hour of intercourse between herself and Nelly.

"You should come to my home, and let me nurse and take care of you always, Nelly. I know uncle would let you," Geraldine said one day.

"I would rather stay with mother, Geraldine."

"Mother!" Geraldine said bitterly, and bursting into tears. "Mother doesn't deserve that you should. She is not worthy such pure love as yours, little Nelly."

"We none of us deserve anything good, Geraldine mavourneen," said the child, fixing her dark blue eyes on her sister's face; "but the good Lord said, 'It is more blessed to give than to receive.' Shure, and He practised what He said. I'll stay in my own home, dear—stay where mother is, as long as God gives me to her."

"'Tis such a wretched place for you, you little angel!" cried Geraldine, almost passionately, as she glanced from the window into the dirty court below, and then at the pure spiritual face of the sick child.

But Nelly smiled one of her most heavenly smiles in answer, and said: "Shure, thin, Geraldine mavourneen, heaven will seem all the brighter afterwards. Oh," she added, "if I can only do a little bit of the Master's work, and rescue mother from the dhrink before I go, it'll be worth staying here for! Geraldine," she whispered, eagerly, "often—even now, mavourneen—I see around me, in mother's dirty room outside, not the ugly broken things she has, but golden streets, and jasper walls, and pearly gates, and the companies of angels. I don't hear

the screams and wretched quarrelling in the court below, but I listen to the harping and the songs of heaven. Don't pity me ever, Geraldine ; I'm very nearly home."

There was a long pause. On the small, round, deal table which Tim had bought to hold Nelly's treasures—and which Geraldine had draped with a beautiful crimson cloth, hanging in soft luxuriant folds, to gratify the sick child's taste for fair forms and colours—there now lay, beside the Bible and hymn-book, a lovely little bouquet of rich violets, deep royal blue in tint, and surrounded by the exquisite green of their bright leaves. Mr. Knight had sent them to his little friend.

"Will you give me my flowers, Geraldine?" said Nelly.

Her sister handed to her the fragrant treasures. She took them in her small, white, wasted hands, looked lovingly at them, kissed each floweret in her old, child fashion, and then said,—

"I think heaven will be *full* of flowers, Geraldine ; don't you?"

"'There everlasting spring abides, and never-withering flowers,'" quoted her sister.

"Yes ; but we shall have the summer flowers there too," said Nelly—"*every* kind. Will they be brighter and better than what we have here?—can they be? You know, Geraldine mavourneen, the little flowers never sinned ; so they never lost their sweetness and fairness—did they?"

"I should think not," said Geraldine, half-smiling at the strange question. "You will like this piece about the flowers in heaven, Nelly."

And Geraldine read from a book she had brought :—

"'Pursuits are various here, suiting all tastes,
Though holy all, and glorifying God.
Observe yon band pursue the silvan stream:
Mounting among the cliffs they pull the flower--
Springing as soon as pulled—and, marvelling, pry
Into its veins, and circulating blood,
And wondrous mimicry of higher life;
Admire its colours, fragrance, gentle shape,
And thence admire the God who made it so—
So simple, complex, and so beautiful.

"'Behold yon other band, in airy robes
Of bliss: they weave the sacred bower of rose
And myrtle shade, and shadowy verdant bay,
And laurel towering high, and amaranth,
Narcissus sweet, and jessamine; and bring
The clustering vine; stooping with flowers and fruit
The peach and orange; and the sparkling stream
Warbling with nectar to their lips unasked—
And talk the while of everlasting love.'"*

"That is *so* beautiful, Geraldine. I think I like better to think of the flowers in heaven than the gems," said little Nelly. "I don't know so much about the precious stones, though I fancy them from their grandly-sounding names. Jasper and emerald are *such* beautiful words!—arn't they, mavourneen? But I can always think how the flowers will be. Oh, it *will* be sweet!—the little nests of flowers, the wreaths of flowers, the roses, the lilies, Geraldine! I wish I was there."

Nelly's eye had brightened; her whole aspect was changed from listlessness to eager joy.

"What! and leave Tim and me, Nelly?"

She smiled sweetly. "Tim means to come to me, mavourneen; and so do you," she took Geraldine's hand and pressed it to her bosom affectionately.

* Pollok's "Course of Time"

"And mother?" The next moment Geraldine would have given worlds to have recalled those words. The child's face grew deadly white, she shuddered and clung in affright to her sister.

"I see it *so* plainly, Geraldine. Heaven without her; she reeling away from God, and hope, and goodness. Jesus, have mercy on my drunken mother!" she sobbed hysterically; and Geraldine, grieved at heart, drew her on to her lap, laid the fair head upon her shoulder, and sang sweet hymns of the Saviour's love, till Nelly was tranquillized and almost happy.

"'Tis never too late for Him, is it, mavourneen?" she whispered. "Perhaps, when I go home, mother may want to come too."

Soon she dropped asleep, and Geraldine sat watching her, noting the pretty pink tint that came and went, and then stayed and deepened into carmine on her thin cheeks; thinking how pure and spotless her young life seemed, amidst all the wretchedness and blackness around; wondering how their mother could have sunk so low, when this little angel-presence hovered round the house; and praising God that this gentle heart would soon have done with the life-sorrow which strong drink had made for her in the degradation of her parents.

At the beginning of February Fred Coleridge left London for a visit to Plymouth. The evening before his departure, he came in with Tim to bid good-bye to little Nelly. Geraldine was sitting by the sick child; she generally spent the afternoon with her, staying till Tim returned from the counting-house.

"I'm going home to-morrow, Nelly dear," said Fred, emptying his pockets of oranges, and bon-bons, and little cakes, before he took the chair beside her, and held her little white, wan, wasted hands in his own, so brown and strong; "so, I've come to say good-bye to you; see to it that you get stronger and better before I come back again."

"It's I that am very glad to see you, Fred. And oh, thank you for all the nice things!" said Nelly, looking up at the bright earnest face and the kind eyes that looked so tenderly into her own; the young sailor's frank, fresh, pleasant manner always brought sunshine into the house with him—heart-sunshine, that most priceless of treasures.

"And what sort of a story do you want to-night, Nelly?" said Fred. "Must it be about the tall palms, and the scarlet cactus flowers; or of old Uncle Sam, sitting on deck with Bible and tracts?"

"I don't think I will have any yarns to-night at all," said Nelly, smiling; "but a talk with ye instead, Fred; because I'm not going to get stronger and better in this world, Fred; and ye know it's the very last talk we will have togither at all at all, till we reach 'the other side of Jordan.'"

"I think I must go now, darling Nelly," said Geraldine; "for I promised uncle not to be late. Fred Coleridge, will you stay with her till Tim comes back? I will not keep him longer than I can help."

"Gladly; and I shall look in at the square after I leave here, so I will not say good-bye yet, Miss Geraldine."

Geraldine clasped her little sister in her arms, kissed many times the sweet lips and calm brow, and said, as she laid her back again amongst her pillows in her comfortable chair,—

"Don't let her talk too much, Fred Coleridge. Mind, Nelly, you must get some sleep to-night, dear one."

Tim kissed Nelly very tenderly, as was always his wont, before he left her. A sore trouble was before him, each day drawing nearer and nearer, and his heart could not feel reconciled to the Divine will that was about to separate him from his "darlint." He saw in her fading health the natural fruit of the neglect from which she had suffered in her earliest childhood, and in his inmost soul cursed the drinking system with renewed, redoubled energy.

When they had gone, Fred sat looking into the fire, and still held little Nelly's hand in his.

"Sing to me," she said.

"What must I sing, dear?"

"The 'Better Land.'"

Fred complied; he had learned it long ago in the Plymouth Sunday-school, before he had seen the "feathery palm-trees," and the "dates," and the "golden sands," and the "strange bright birds on their starry wings," of which it speaks; but now each allusion was full of meaning to him, and he sang it with extreme beauty of expression.

"Thank you," said Nelly, emphatically, when he had finished; then they were silent again.

"Fred," she said, after a few minutes' thought, "I will niver be able to tell ye all about Paris. Ye *should* have

seen the flowers there, and heard the music. Oh, but it *was* lovely! And yet I am going now to see better flowers, and hear lovelier music: and thin, ye know, Fred," she added, solemnly, "when I was there I kept thinkin' about the mother at home, and feeling *so* sorry; but"—and her eyes brightened as she sang in her feeble voice,—

"'There'll be no more sorrow there,
There'll be no more sorrow there;
In heaven above, where all is love,
There'll be no more sorrow there.

Fred, dear Fred," she went on, earnestly, "I want you to comfort Tim and Geraldine when I am gone away. I think Tim will be afther throubling a sad deal when he misses me. Poor Tim! dear Tim! Oh, Fred Coleridge, shure ye don't know the half of the goodness of my darlint Tim! There's another thing, Fred, I want to spake to ye about, and that is—the dhrink. I want ye to promise me to do more than ye have done yet towards making an end of the dhrink; and when ye have a ship of yer own, Fred, 'twill be *shure* to be a timperance ship?"

"Oh yes, Nelly, quite sure! but that is a long way off yet, I expect," said Fred, smiling.

"I would like to give ye a little bit of a keepsake," said Nelly. "Will ye give me that little paper case, Fred?"

Fred handed it to her; she looked over the little cards, on all of which there were paintings of flowers, fashioned by her own unskilled but tasteful fingers.

"It's not much of a thing for a keepsake, is it?" she said, timidly; "but I haven't anything better to give ye."

"You could not give me anything I should prize more," said Fred, honestly, the tears coming into his eyes as he looked at her and listened to her; "and I shall always keep it, Nelly. I will fasten the little card you give me into my Bible: see, Nelly," and he pulled out from his pocket a well-worn but handsomely-bound Bible, the gift of his parents on his last leaving home. "Which am I to have, dear? and you shall see me put it in."

"I would like ye to *choose* one," said Nelly.

He spread his red pocket-handkerchief over his knees, laid the cards out upon it, carefully examined them, and then took in his hand the one on which was painted a primrose and a snowdrop, their stems tied together with a little knot of blue ribbon.

"That's not very well done," said Nelly, eyeing it with the air of a connoisseur; "I did that before my darlint Geraldine tould me how to do the painting, at all at all."

"But I like it very much indeed, Nelly; and I shall keep it always, if I possibly can," said Fred. "There, that's how it will look," and Fred laid it on the fly-leaf of his Bible, made four slits in the paper with his pocket-knife, and slipped the card into its proper place; then he wrote on it: "From my dear little Nelly Maloney. Feb. 3, 18—."

Nelly smiled a bright smile as she watched him.

"Ye'll think of me now, Fred, when I am gone?"

"I should never have forgotten you, Nelly."

Fred gazed into the fire. A sudden desire came upon him to make the little girl his confidante, in his

hopes regarding her sister. Would it add to her pleasure and comfort? he thought, he almost hoped it would. So after a long silence, he said, with a quivering voice,—

"Nelly!"

"Yes, Fred." She looked at him in surprise.

"I want to tell you something, if you can keep a secret."

"Will it be about my Geraldine?"

Fred started. Had he betrayed himself then?

"Yes; about Geraldine. What made you think so, Nelly?"

"I see your eyes watch my darlint sister," said little Nelly; "and I know ye love her dearly; and she so beautiful and good, how would ye be able to help it, shure, an' I'm so glad; we've always seemed just like one family, and now we will be by-and-by; but I will be in heaven before then."

Tim entered at that moment. He tried to speak cheerfully to Nelly; but he seemed in poor spirits that evening, and sat by the fire almost moodily—a strange contrast to his usually bright manner.

After a little while Fred rose to go.

"I think I'll give ye a text to remember me by," said little Nelly, as he stood by her, waiting for the last shake of her little hand: "'Quit ye like men; be strong.' Ye will not forget it, Fred. If I had had strength, I think I would have worked for my God," said Nelly, earnestly; "only," she added, "I haven't even done what I could; so I will be boasting afther all. Good-bye, Fred; dear Fred."

He stooped down and whispered as he kissed her, "Good-bye, my little sister—my dear little Nelly—God bless you;" and then, choked with sobs, wrung Tim's hand, and hurried from the room.

Tim sat after this, with his face hidden by his hands, and little Nelly's dark blue eyes gazed intently at him. They heard the steps of the young sailor descending the creaking stairs—heard his manly tread along Tyler's Court, and out into the alley, and still they neither of them spoke.

It was Nelly's weak voice that broke the silence,—

"Tim darlint!"

Tim did not answer her.

"Tim darlint!" the sweet voice said again; "won't ye come to me?"

Tim was at her side in a moment. He sat down on the hearth-rug before the fire, laid his head in her lap, and gave full vent to the grief that had mastered him. And all the while little Nelly's thin white hands wandered through Tim's red hair—playing with it as Tim liked to have done—and soothing his grief by that quiet, loving touch. It was sad to see how the great tears rolled over Tim's face; and Nelly saw them all, for they glistened in the firelight as they fell; but she did not attempt to interrupt that outbreak of sorrow; she knew it would ease the loving, tender heart that for so many weeks had always pent up its grief in her presence. But when he was a little calmer she talked to him, not wanting any answers from him, but telling him how precious his love had been to her; how she should remember it in heaven; how she could not recollect that he had ever been cross

to her in all her life; and many other things that she felt it would comfort him after she was gone to know she had thought of and said to him.

"Nelly," Tim said at last—"Nelly, I could betther give ye up if I thought this throuble came straight from God; but He did not mean ye to be out in the cold with scarcely a garmint to cover ye; He did not mean ye not to have sufficient food when ye were a tiny little one, and for long afther. It seems as if the devil had made ye ill, and I don't know how to bear it. The dhrink is cursed of God, it is; and how is it God's will, thin, that ye should die?"

"Hush! Tim darlint; I don't think the dear Lord likes to hear ye spake so," said little Nelly; "an' shure, if ye are thrue in what ye say, He is making it all up to me; for heaven is betther than earth; and I'll be *so* happy. And, by-and-by, when ye've done yer work, Tim darlint, and helped to make the dear people sober, and to win back the mother to goodness, ye'll be coming home, and I'll welcome ye. O Tim, I *will* welcome ye! Will ye sing with me now, Tim, and thin I'll be afther going to bed. I'm tired, Tim."

Tim read, and sang, and prayed with his little sister, as he had done nightly for years, and then summoned Biddy Simmons, who came in for an hour or two every evening to arrange for the comfort of the little invalid during the night. Many beautiful talks had Nelly with poor Biddy; confirming her in all that was good and holy; strengthening her teetotalism, and deepening every religious impression she had ever received. But the work Nelly longed to accomplish towards her poor

mother was undone. Ellen Maloney evidently avoided Nelly's sick-chamber; she seldom entered it save for a few moments, and those were uncomfortable ones for both. She was hardly ever thoroughly sober now; but Timothy Maloney had, much to his little daughter's surprise, spent many an hour beside her arm-chair, patiently listening to her faithful words, kissing and blessing her, and telling her she was "as good as a praist" when he left her. And between Tim and his father, through their mutual interest in little Nelly, there grew up very slowly, but surely, an understanding that bid fair to ripen into friendship, if the Irishman would only keep from his old haunts, and pay some regard to decency in his dress and general conduct. Nelly had many visitors to her little room. Poor little Kitty, from the Blind Institution, came every week to stroke and kiss the gentle face that she knew and loved so well. Mr. Waterhouse came and talked to Nelly on the subjects dearest to her heart; answered all those little difficulties which now and then puzzled her brain; but which no more disturbed her serenity than do the fair, fleecy clouds disturb the beauty of a summer sky; and Mr. Philp called in often with Tim for an hour's chat before he returned home from his office. Nelly was always very fond of, and very grateful to, Mr. Philp, for his many acts of kindness long ago; when she—Tim's baby-sister—had come out of the darkness and misery of Tyler's Court, to bask in the genial warmth and kindliness of the Band of Hope meetings and the night-school.

"An' don't ye mind," she would say, "how ye used to make the little sofa for me out of the cushions and the

corner of the form? Oh, but ye *were* kind to poor little Nelly!"

February passed away, and March had come, still little Nelly lingered. Geraldine was with her almost constantly now; and hardly a day passed without Mr. Knight calling to see his little friend, and bringing some beautiful flower. He generally took Geraldine and his offering to Tyler's Court before going to his counting-house; and in the evening Tim brought home some little nicety to tempt her failing appetite, or some blossom that he had seen and purchased for her by the way; so that her little room, early spring as it was, was never empty of flowers. Nelly was confined to her bed now; and one afternoon, as Geraldine watched beside her, and sang to her her favourite hymns, she quietly sank into a deep sleep. By-and-by Tim entered, with a beaming smile on his pleasant face, and a beautiful crimson camellia in his hand. When he saw Nelly was asleep, he drew near the couch with a light step, and knelt beside it. Nelly roused a little, looked at him and the fair bright flower with a sweet smile, held up her lips for a kiss, murmured, "Tim darlint;" then took his hand in one of hers, and the crimson flower in the other, and slept again. All the colour left her face; it grew very white. They watched on an hour or more; there was a slight noise in her throat—a sob, a sigh; her little hands relaxed their grasp, her lips became pale, and Nelly was dead. Tim and Geraldine could not realize it; not until the slight form grew cold with the rigidity of Death's icy touch; and then with a wail of agony Tim kissed the brow, and lips, and hands of his little Nelly.

NELLY'S DEATH.

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"Ah, mavourneen! my little one; my Nelly; to think of death snatching ye away without a good-bye! Shure, and he might have given ye time for that. Och, thin, I wish I was dead myself, and beside ye, darlint! What will I have to struggle, and live, and be good for, now that ye're gone?"

A week later there was a child's funeral in Kensal Green Cemetery. Little Nelly was borne from the hearse to her grave by the loving hands of her father, her brother, Mr. Philp, and one of the other teachers in the evening school; and behind the coffin walked Geraldine, leaning on the arm of Mr. Knight, while he guided little blind Kitty with his other hand. And at this hour Nelly's wretched mother, awed by the presence of death in her house, had pawned a black dress that Geraldine had given her for the funeral, and with the money had bought drink, and gone to the house of an Irish neighbour to keep a "wake" for her dead child.

Mr. Waterhouse officiated. And as they sung a hymn softly and reverently beside her resting-place, the dark thunder-clouds, which had been gathering for hours, met overhead; the lightning flashed around in broad, brilliant sheets of radiance, and the loud thunder pealed; the artillery of heaven rolling forth a magnificent *feu de joie* of victory over the gentle little Christian's grave.

CHAPTER XXV.

TEMPERANCE ADVOCACY.

LATE one night, when all the rest of the household were in bed, Mr. Knight sat in his easy-chair by the cosy fire in the dining-room at Woburn Square, pondering over many things. Just a fortnight before, he had stood beside the grave of little Nelly, and had read the simple inscription upon the brass plate on the small coffin :—

ELLEN MALONEY,
Died March 3, 18—,
Aged 12½ *Years.*

"Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God."

And he was thinking now of that little life, so brief, and yet so full of usefulness and devotion to her Saviour ;—thinking, too, of her patience, and sweetness, and gratitude. "Gratitude!" ah, how little he had shown of thankfulness to God for the many mercies he enjoyed ; while a flower, a kind word, a gentle look, made her young heart overflow with love and praise.

"My riches increase," thought the merchant. "God

grant I may not be found to set my heart upon them." And then he mused again. He felt very sure that Geraldine and Fred—unconsciously as yet, perhaps, to the young girl, but not, he felt convinced, without aim on the part of the fine-spirited young mate—were fast becoming linked to each other by the holiest and closest of all earthly ties. Mr. Knight felt a little pang, as a fond father naturally might, at the thought of his darling Geraldine's leaving his home for that of another—even in a far-off future; but he knew it was inevitable; "and," thought he, "Geraldine, as the wife of a prosperous captain—for that Fred will become—will need no great fortune to insure her happiness; indeed, it would not be likely to add to it for her to possess very much money. I must guard against any possibility of want for my darling child, as far as it is practicable to do so; and if I settle on her, and her children after her, three hundred a-year, I think that will meet every requirement. Cornelia will be comfortably provided for with about the same amount. I have no desire to leave great wealth behind me. I would rather spend it judiciously whilst I live. I suppose many would tell me I am not so very old—I may yet see the woman I wish for my wife; but they little know me who can think thus. No; my poor darling, my Dulcinea, my beautiful, my bride, yours was as true a heart as ever breathed—we shall yet meet again, I trust. Love of that kind has, can have, no place in my plans for this life. I should like to devote my property to some grand scheme of usefulness; and, if possible, in connection with the temperance reformation. I think I will consult Waterhouse." And when he had come to

this conclusion, and made some reckonings as to the amount of money he purposed expending on this, as yet, unknown object, he retired to rest.

The next morning Mr. Waterhouse received a note of invitation to dine at Woburn Square, which invitation he accepted; and after dinner—when Miss Knight and Geraldine had left them to fulfil some previous engagement—the two gentlemen drew their chairs together close to the bright fire, and cracked their nuts, and ate their oranges, while Mr. Knight began the conversation by saying:—

"Waterhouse, if you had a good sum of money—say three or four thousand pounds—to spend in the temperance movement, in a period of two or three years, what course should you adopt?"

Mr. Waterhouse lifted his eyebrows in surprise; and there was a humorous expression round his mouth as he replied: "My dear sir, I think I may safely wait till some most generous friend—such as I have never met with yet—arises to inform me that it *is* his deliberate intention so to spend a fortune!"

Mr. Knight could not help laughing at his surprise; then he said, "Many a man has dedicated his *all* to the temperance enterprise—health, strength, reputation, hope of advancement. I count it a light thing to give a few thousand pounds, that have really, to say the truth, given me very little trouble to earn them."

"My dear sir," said Mr. Waterhouse, "you—you destine that amount to further the good cause? I am rejoiced, truly. I congratulate you on the power and the will to do so much good."

"Well; but," said Mr. Knight, "tell me how I may best use it."

"I should like to open up a plan to you that I have long had in my own brain; but never expected to have the opportunity to propound, with the least hope of its being adopted."

"Tell me what it is," said Mr. Knight.

"You know, sir, how often we—in common with all true friends of temperance—have felt grieved at the nonsense—often illogical, illiterate nonsense—that is talked on temperance platforms. My proposal is, that some sort of college should be established for the proper training of temperance speakers. I should like it to be able to advance the interests of any youth, poor or rich, amongst our Bands of Hope who showed a talent for public speaking, and was able and willing to devote himself to the work. I should like the education provided to embrace such a wide range that we need not blush for the mistakes in grammar, and history, and physiology, of our young lecturers. Why should we not have *temperance* colleges, just as we have theological colleges?"

"Why not?" echoed Mr. Knight, eagerly. "My dear friend, you have hit upon the very thing that conscience, and heart, and brain approve—a scheme that I verily believe will meet a great want, felt more and more sorely as the educational advantages of the masses increase; for there will come a time, I hope and believe, when a man who has nothing to say will *not* be listened to on a temperance, or any other, platform. Unless we keep pace in our glorious and noble movement with the requirements of the age, we cannot hope to convince the people

of the grandeur and justice of teetotalism, and its perfect harmony with the laws of the great and good God."

"Just so," said Mr. Waterhouse. "When the movement was commenced, and for some few years after, none but men who were thoroughly in earnest, specially dedicated to their work, embraced the advocacy of teetotalism. No mean, sordid motive could operate, for no advantage was in those days to be gained, but rather ignominy and reproach, from the espousal of our principles: there was, too, a noble self-devotion to the cause that preserved men from careless speech-making on its behalf. Some of our early advocates had the true martyr spirit in them; they would have even died for the truth they maintained. This intense earnestness and zeal saved their hearers from drowsiness or disgust; if their similes *were* now and then far-fetched, or even somewhat coarse, it was atoned for by the strength and manliness of their style. It was not to raise a laugh, nor to foster a false taste for the *outré*, that they were abrupt, and vehement, and strong. Many of these earliest temperance reformers have passed away—gone to hear the welcome of the good and faithful servants who were found trustworthy, whether with one talent or five; and some, thank God, are with us still, amongst our best advocates yet, for the old fire is brightly burning in their hearts, and has been replenished again and again. Then there are some younger in the cause, but no less zealous than these; men who take up the movement from the very best of motives, and who advance its claims with remarkable ability. Then there are others—"

Mr. Waterhouse paused, and shrugged his shoulders, significantly.

"My friend," said Mr. Knight, "if we want to meet a difficulty, we must probe it, in order rightly to understand our position."

"It is a difficult subject, sir, a very difficult subject; there are such a number of men who advocate temperance for no other object than to gain their living and a full purse."

"And there is no harm in the world in their wishing to gain an honest maintenance," Mr. Knight said, earnestly. "Waterhouse, you mistake altogether my notions of right and wrong on this subject, if you think I should object to a man receiving fair payment for his labour, whatever that labour may be; many a man with a talent for public speaking, who cannot afford to offer his services gratuitously to a great moral reform, is really giving a great deal to that reform, while he devotes his energies honestly to its furtherance, even though he may be paid for his advocacy. *I* long to impress the claims of Temperance on the world, but I am a *very* poor speaker, unless it may be now and then to the children, I *can* get a few words out to them: but I should not think of employing a man to enunciate the truths I believe in without wishing to pay him properly for preparing himself to do so; nor should I think that he was not in earnest, as much as myself, because he felt he could not give his valuable services without suitable remuneration. Our really good orators are sadly underpaid. A man that, on many other platforms, could command three or four hundred a-year, has to be content with a paltry two or

three guineas a-week, if he devotes himself to teetotalism: that fact will always keep out a great many men from our ranks who would otherwise be most valuable lecturers; but who, in justice to their families, cannot afford to continue as labourers amongst us."

"Oh, I grant that most fully," said Mr. Waterhouse. "I am quite sure that our ablest men are, as you say, underpaid; but the flashy speakers, men who, almost without brains, make a boast of the wicked courses they once indulged in, instead of being humble, and desiring to atone for the past by a noble present, can command almost any sum, because the titles they assume and their charlatanry draw crowds, just as a Punch and Judy show might do; these crowds drop so many pennies into the collection-boxes in their transports of delight at the revelations of unheard-of wickednesses, that the committees congratulate themselves on having secured the *valuable* services of Mr. So-and-So, ex-rope-walker, or ex-thief, and hope to have the pleasure of another visit from him ere long, an announcement which is hailed with shouts of approval and applause by that vast crowd of men and women, and boys and girls, who have not, as yet, learned to think, and whom, instead of *educating* during the evening, our lecturer has debased."

"Waterhouse, you use strong language."

"Do I, sir? it is because I *feel* so strongly. I have been ready, Mr. Knight, I can assure you, to weep bitter tears of mortification at the foolery I have listened to from the adventurers, who dare to stand on temperance platforms and mock the fair white-robed angel of Temperance by their hideous antics and degrading stories of their

past evil lives; but, pray, do not mistake me, dear sir, I am not talking now of the advocacy of reformed drunkards, who hold up their past career as a mirror for other drunkards to see themselves in and take warning by; and who, with great pointedness and truth, but with a just horror of that bondage from which they are now free, satirize with unsparing tongue the *mercy* of the publican, and picture the wretchedness of their own former poverty, and squalor, and hunger. Oh, sir, I have listened to the rough unpolished sentences of such as these, with a glad pulse throbbing in my heart that 'the snare is broken, and they have escaped.' I believe that reformed drunkards, 'clothed and in their right minds,' occupying respectable positions in society, on terms of equality with honourable men, is one of the most encouraging sights that can be presented before those who are still in the 'horrible pit' of Intemperance; and however great and grand a movement your college for the education of young speakers may grow, I trust, as long as there are reformed drunkards on the platform, and other drunkards to be spoken to in the audience, we shall never cease to employ occasionally their most powerful and valuable advocacy. But, then, a man who is truly reformed in heart and soul, as well as outward life, will witness to his past degradation with feelings of humility, and if he becomes a professed advocate, and should think it wise to retain a name that will recall his former condition to the minds of his hearers, he will *not* be constantly raking over the most abominable scenes in that experience, but will pass on to a new, fresh career, lightly touching on the past, and endeavouring only to use it as a stepping-

stone to greater things, for others, and for himself, in the future. Am I making myself intelligible?"

"Quite," replied Mr. Knight. "Purity of thought and feeling should surely be most intimately associated with every speech made in favour of teetotalism; this reform should be advocated from the noble stand-point of our duty to God and man. No other is high enough. Buffoonery, or sordid love of gain, will never influence the masses for good; it may induce men, under the influence of strong excitement, to sign the pledge—it will not teetotalise them to the backbone."

"No, indeed," replied Mr. Waterhouse; "the men who have kept the pledge steadily and bravely, through good and evil report, are mostly the converts of our zealous, far-seeing, deep-thinking, faithful advocates: and it is natural they should be so. Then we have a great number of amateur speakers, many of them extremely well able to promote the cause; others, ignorant of the commonest rules for attracting and keeping the attention of their hearers. But I am convinced that the necessity for a college such as I have hinted at is becoming more and more felt. We have great need of a number of accredited, able, cultivated speakers, fitted according to their different capacities to address Bands of Hope, to sing and recite in a respectable and indeed superior manner, and to lecture to adults."

"I think you are quite right," said the merchant; "but how would you manage? Should the college be open to all who desired to become temperance lecturers?"

"Assuredly not; only to those who evince a real gift for public speaking, else we may be in as much danger

of an oratorical plague as we are already of a musical plague, since every female child, whether she loves music or not, is to be taught now to play the piano in some fashion or other. We are overwhelmed already with poor speakers; with men who could much better aid the cause by working in other directions, than by attempting to give utterance to thoughtless remarks or fulsome platitudes on the platform. My idea was this, sir: to have you employ the fortune you so generously dedicate to teetotalism in founding a college for the preparation of a certain number of students for the public advocacy of our principles; say you had twelve young men, all desirous to become public speakers—all gifted with some address, a good voice, and a pleasant countenance—I should not care what grade of society they came from, let them all receive educational advantages, in proportion to their needs, as well as the special education for oratorical proficiency."

"How would you provide this special education?" asked Mr. Knight.

"Just as we teach other branches of learning, by obtaining for the students a thoroughly good professor of elocution. Then I would have them hear our best orators as frequently as possible, and take them as models in style; also, they must freely practise their own powers, as our ministerial students practise theirs, in small assemblies, in country villages, in weekly meetings of societies anywhere, everywhere; they should also lecture amongst themselves, and criticize each other's performances. I am quite convinced that the art of public speaking properly taught to and cultivated in those who

have also a natural capability and love for it, would make for us some really fine lecturers; the very stamp that we need to enlighten the people at this crisis of the temperance agitation. I believe most fully in the usefulness of the Permissive Bill, but, in spite of all laws, we shall still need just such a band of advocates as I have suggested, well-trained, well-educated, fearless, zealous, devoted."

"And would you have them all members of the Band of Hope?"

"Most certainly I would, sir. I should like the ambition of becoming an inmate of your college to fire the hearts of our young people—the poorest boy as well as the richest."

"And it should be a free education, and the whole course of study be offered gratuitously?"

"I think not; but these things will need further thought, sir, than I have given to the plan, for I never dreamt in my most sanguine moments that the money would be forthcoming so soon."

"I like all your suggestions very much," said Mr. Knight. "I think I should require my collegians to remain at college at least three years, so that a real hold might be got upon them in every way, and that we might somewhat test their characters and abilities before sending them into the world. At what age should we take them?"

"Not younger than eighteen, nor older than two-and-twenty. Their having previously followed another occupation need not be a barrier to their entering the college; indeed, I should rather prefer that the boys learned a trade

or had some profession independent of their lecturing—it would keep their minds fresher, less morbid, or disposed to view the world only through temperance spectacles. We must let them read freely the works of our opponents, meet freely the arguments that are brought against us; a bold, manly independence of thought and action, a conviction formed in their own minds by their own reasoning of the value and the truth of our principles—this is what I should wish to see in every one of them."

"I will think it all over. I see so much that is desirable in your scheme, Waterhouse, that I am already a convert to your wishes. One thing I know," added the merchant: "if the college *is* founded, Tim Maloney shall be the first student."

Mr. Waterhouse smiled. "Dear lad," he said; "who would have believed, years ago, when I first met him in Candlemas Alley, that he would have turned out such a noble character? and yet even then, dirty and neglected as he was, there was that about the boy which won me to him at once. He has a wonderful talent as a speaker—that pathetic beauty of language and that exceeding drollery of expression which will make him an almost invaluable advocate. I only fear he will so far eclipse the other students, that they may be a little discouraged."

"We will make him tutor, then," laughed Mr. Knight. "I shall be glad if anything rouses him," he added, seriously, "for he is almost grieving himself to a shadow for his little Nelly. He has a most affectionate heart."

"He has indeed," returned Mr. Waterhouse. After a pause, he added, "You can't think how sanguine and delighted I feel at the probability of this Temperance

College; if you had listened, sir, as often as I have, to temperance twaddle, temperance bombast, temperance foolery, and temperance bluster, you would have felt, as I often have, ready to cry, 'Save Temperance from her friends;' yet I can forgive almost *any* advocacy that is *sincere* and *earnest*, however unpolished. But when I hear men talking, merely for gold, or fame, or to hear the 'music of their own vain tongues'—in short, for any form of self-love—I grow weary and faint indeed. How can we expect God's blessing to rest on work that is not faithfully done to Him? I am not a croaker; I do not believe that the vast majority of temperance work is done from other than most pure motives, but because of this I am all the more anxious to purify the movement, as far as possible, from false advocacy. Temperance men are not less human than other men; there will be shortcomings, failures, disappointments; the temperance pledge does not profess to protect a man from anything besides the taking and consequent evil effects of intoxicating liquors. But *he* is the truest exemplifier of temperance who uses it but as the platform or ladder from which to reach to higher things, and who regards it as one of the graces of the Holy Spirit, as much as 'faith, virtue, patience, long-suffering, meekness, charity.'"

The gentlemen were both silent, and as Cornelia Knight and Geraldine entered at that moment, the conversation concerning the college was not again resumed.

CHAPTER XXVI.

GOOD-BYE.

IT would be impossible to describe the loneliness of Tim in those months of spring after his little Nelly had left him; he walked indeed through the "valley of the shadow of death." The sunshine that found its way even into Tyler's Court, and into the little room she had occupied, seemed to grow dim, because her bright, sweet presence was no longer there; her flowers drooped, now that they missed the tending of her fair hands; and through all his thoughts — through all those overwhelming hours of agony which stirred his heart as no other trouble had ever done—there ran continually the consciousness that if Nelly had had a sober mother, a decent home, she might yet have been with them—his "cherished darlint" —his companion—his friend. Both Mr. Knight and Mr. Christie noticed, with sorrow, the sad hopelessness of Tim's manner; all the more noticeable because he had been, until now, so light-hearted and cheerful under misfortune. And both partners were earnest in their desire

to see their young clerk recover something of his former gaiety. Mr. Knight often sent Geraldine to Putney with her brother, to have a row on the silvery waters of the beautiful Thames. Mr. Christie had purchased a boat the previous summer for his boys, and now that they were away at school and college, it was at Tim's service; and in it he often rowed Minnie Christie and Geraldine for some miles through the pleasant quiet scenery that lines the banks of the broad, beautiful river. It was just such a soothing, agreeable occupation as tended to refresh his spirits, without in any way jarring on them; and both his companions loved the memory of the sweet child-sister he had lost only less than himself.

At the end of April, Fred Coleridge came back from Plymouth; the *Geraldine* was to sail in about a month. In those beautiful bright days of spring when the warmth of the sunshine bursts the opening buds and paints a delicate tracery of green on every bough, when the birds are full of song and the whole earth seems to resound with praise to the great Creator of so much loveliness and joy, the four young people—Minnie, Tim, Fred, and Geraldine—were thrown much into each other's society; for Mr. Knight wisely thought nothing else would be so likely to bring back hope to Tim's sad heart, and to plant pleasant memories in the minds of Fred and Geraldine, so he planned excursions for them almost every day, giving them up to the pleasures of the hour with a generosity that was born of his extreme love for and interest in them.

One day, bright and golden with the deepening beauty of the summer that was so nearly come, the young men

rowed their fair companions to Kew, and leaving the boat in the care of a boy, strolled for some hours through the beautiful conservatories and gardens.

"Geraldine," said Fred Coleridge, as they lingered behind Tim and Minnie, and finally took another path, under the arching green of the beautiful trees—"Geraldine, I never felt it so hard to be a sailor as I do to-day; it never was so difficult to leave Old England before."

"I don't think it is nearly as sad for those who go as for those who are left behind," said Geraldine impulsively: "the travellers see new sights and new places, have fresh events happening every day, form new friendships, while those who are left have nothing but the same things to do, the same things to see, as they always had."

Fred looked round at her, and down into her eyes; she met his gaze for a moment, and only for a moment; her eyelids drooped, and her face was very crimson. The young mate thought he had never seen her look so lovely before. The mourning robes she wore for little Nelly shaded somewhat the colouring of her bright hair and brilliant complexion; and there was a look of wistfulness, almost of sadness, on the young brow. Geraldine was learning the lesson which all must learn, sooner or later, that no state in this life, however happy, is free from change; that we cannot, as we fain would, hold our dearest treasures all our lives long within our close embrace. Death had snatched from her her beloved little sister—the ocean would soon separate her from the manly young sailor at her side, around whom, with but

a vague sense of the truth, she was beginning to link all her hopes, all her romance, all her thoughts of comfort and pleasure. Life wore a new and sadder aspect to Geraldine Maloney. Perhaps none of us can be so happy as God intended us to be, until we learn to seek happiness less in outward circumstances than in earnest life-work; above all, in that "peace which passeth all understanding."

"Are you sorry that I am going, Geraldine?" Fred asked, still looking at her intently, as if he would fain engrave that fair picture on his heart for ever. Around the crape collar of her small jacket Geraldine wore his gift, the necklace of pearls; the black crape hat, with its softly floating feather, rested on the wavy chestnut locks of her hair, and from beneath it her beautiful face, instinct with warm, generous feelings, and lovely in its purity and sweetness of expression, turned to him when he spoke. The blue eyes were full of tears now, and the coral lips trembled a little as she answered, "O Fred! you know that I am."

"Sorry, Geraldine? You would be sorry if Tim left you for China and India. Are you *more* sorry than that? Do tell me." His tone grew very earnest, and he took her little hand in his as they walked, and drew it through his arm. "We shall only have one day more together, Geraldine, and I feel to have no courage at all when I think of parting from you for years. Dearest Geraldine, I *must* speak. Do not think me very bold, very presumptuous. Do not think me conceited, though I daresay I am all that, and more, for daring to do it. But, Geraldine, my darling, I *cannot* go away without telling

you that I love you. I dare not ask you to promise me that you will love me, me only, and always; for you are very young, Geraldine, and perhaps it would be wrong to bind you to anything. But I only know this—for myself, I shall *never* love anybody but you; and if you *could* say that you love me *just a little* now, and think you *can* get to love me more by-and-by, if I try to make myself worthier of you, I shall be *so* happy." Fred squeezed the little hand he held, and Geraldine returned very timidly, very shyly that warm pressure; the action, slight, timid as it was, encouraged him to continue. "Geraldine, I will tell you all about it, darling.—Do you remember the day of the ship-launch, how you christened the ship with the bottle of sparkling water, and we had a temperance feast on board your namesake? I was such a clumsy boy then, feeling sad at leaving home and being amongst strangers, and you were so kind to me at Mr. Christie's in the afternoon. I am sure, dear, I have loved you ever since then; and at night, Geraldine, while I have kept watch on deck, I have been always thinking about you. You little guessed it, darling, as you slept so peacefully in Woburn Square, that thousands of miles away I was loving you and thinking of you; loving you, too, in the strange Eastern lands under the palms and in the olive-groves; loving you in the tea-gardens of China, and the rice-fields of India, as I loved you on the blue sparkling waves, and on the black waters of the ocean at midnight, with only the silent stars for my witnesses,—as I have loved you here, Geraldine, and in my dear old Devonshire home. Darling, you are always in my heart; I

dream of you by night, I think of you by day. I long, for your dear sake, to be nobler, braver, truer to myself and to my God." Fred paused; then he continued,— "When you told me that your parentage was discovered, that you were Geraldine Maloney, you wondered at my pleasure. It was for this reason: I felt you were more within my reach—I might sooner tell you of my love. Do you forgive me for my wild haste, Geraldine darling; do you think it possible you will ever love me?"

Fred's face, as Geraldine shyly glanced at it, was full of emotion; his dark eyes gleamed brightly with the light of love; there was an expression of fond, protecting, sheltering tenderness on his manly features; it was the index of such a heart as any woman might be proud to win. Geraldine wondered that he loved her so, thought how his boyish admiration had kindled into affection during his long absences from her, and because she felt humbled by the rich wealth of love that was lavished upon her, feared she was unworthy of it, feared he loved the *ideal* instead of the *real* Geraldine.

"I am not half so nice as you think me, Fred," she said, as soon as she could speak. "I am not worth your loving and waiting for so long; you will be disappointed in me."

"Disappointed, Geraldine!" and Fred laughed gaily. "I shall never be disappointed in you. I shall never deserve that you should love me. But you have not told me, darling; do you think you ever *could?* When I come back, in two years' time, will you let me tell everybody that you belong to me? Do you love me enough to be willing to say 'No,' for my sake, to all the many

young gentlemen, handsomer, and richer, and better than I am, who will come to you while I am away." There was a cloud over the brightness of Fred's face, and it grew very serious as he went on: "Geraldine, will you give me leave to talk to you as I want to do? Are you indifferent to me, or do you think, if I try to improve, try to become a really gentlemanly sailor, that you will be able to love me?"

Geraldine smiled. "I think I love you a little bit now, Fred," she said frankly, and then, afraid she had said too much, the pretty head drooped again like a graceful flower sometimes bends under the wooing glance of the warm sun.

"And you think you will learn to love me more?" Fred exclaimed delightedly.

There was a mischievous smile on the sweet lips as she replied, "If you are good, Fred, and obey me like a true knight, or rather like a brave sailor, and love me always."

"And you will write to me, Geraldine?"

"Yes; if Uncle Knight says I may," she whispered.

"Often? Say yes, Geraldine; and not quite as you used to write, now and then, 'Dear Fred Coleridge,' but 'My very dear Fred,' or something of that sort, just to show that you love me; will you?"

There was a merry light in Geraldine's blue eyes, a little assumption of her queenly power over the heart of her lover, as she said, mischievously, "*Very* dear? Who said I *thought* you very dear? Naughty Fred, how you trespass on my kindness!" But Fred understood her, and did not cease pleading; and then he talked long of

his plans for a blissful future to be shared with her, and in sweet unison of heart they spoke of little Nelly and the eternity to be spent together, that yet seemed far away to their young, hopeful hearts, and was only a golden link to bind them closer during their long separation.

"Now, what will you give me to obey you in, my Geraldine?" asked Fred, as they turned back from their walk under the trees to find Tim and Minnie, for the sun was sinking, and they must soon return home.

"I only think of one thing, now," she said. "You must keep your pledge *at all cost*, Fred, if you wish to win me. I could never endure any one who drank wine or anything of that sort."

"I hope I shall never wish you to, darling," he answered, smiling. "I can make that promise easily. You *will* give me one little wave of your beautiful hair, Geraldine, won't you? True lovers should always exchange locks of hair. Oh, here is Tim."

They came upon Tim and Minnie abruptly as they turned round a curve of the path. They all sought the boat at once, and went home. After a late tea at Mr. Christie's, Tim, Fred, and Geraldine returned to London.

A great part of the next day—his last on shore—Fred spent at Woburn Square. In the morning he had a long conversation with Mr. Knight. He frankly told him of his avowal to Geraldine, and they agreed that for the present nothing further need be decided or known.

"Geraldine is very young, my dear Fred," Mr. Knight said. "It is possible—though you will, I fear, think me

cruel for saying so—it *is just possible* that she does not as yet thoroughly know her own mind. I don't *think* so of my darling. I believe she will be faithful to you; but it is best as it is until your return. I shall hold this confidence sacred, and will avow nothing at present."

"May not Geraldine come here now? Will you not give us your blessing, sir?" Fred's tone was earnest; it was not a request Mr. Knight could refuse. "And, sir, if anything happens," said Fred—his voice growing husky—"to the ship, or anything of that kind, and Geraldine is in sore trouble, and people should wonder, you—;" but Fred could not get any further, and fairly broke down.

"I understand you perfectly. I will either explain or shield her from curious eyes," said Mr. Knight, himself not unmoved. "But, my dear lad, what makes you speak so sadly? Is not the *Geraldine* an A1 ship, and have you not returned in perfect safety from many a long voyage? Are we not equally in God's hands whether on land or sea?"

"I know it, sir, I know it," said Fred; "but it seems such a long, weary time to leave her."

"Bring me Geraldine, Fred."

Fred found her in the old school-room, now her study or boudoir, and brought her into Mr. Knight's library. She came in shyly, her hand in his, her eyes downcast, her face radiant with blushes.

"So, my darling," said the merchant, as he drew her to him, "your heart is going to take a long voyage, is it, and you are to keep Fred's the while?"

Geraldine hid her face on her guardian's shoulder.

"Fred wishes, my child, that I should bless you in your love for each other. I do; I pray earnestly that it may increase daily, hourly, growing in strength and purity; and that it may lead you both into closer, more reverent love to the good God and Father of us all, who permits such sweet intercourse between the hearts of man and woman. If this love of yours be a *true* love, it will make you both willing to suffer trials for each other—it will draw you close together in joy and in sorrow—it will raise your natures, make you humble, make you desirous to be better and more worthy of each other's love; my dear children," and Mr. Knight smoothed Geraldine's bright hair as he spoke, "I can only wish for you, in this most important step of your young lives, the best and richest blessings of our God."

In the evening, after the moon was up, Fred and Geraldine had a last walk together in St. James's Park. The fair, soft light was reflected in the ornamental water, and shone in full splendour over each leafy tree, and upon the faces of the young lovers, as they gazed with a new, sweet joy into each other's eyes. But the loveliness of the scene could not make them forget the coming parting. Fred had to be on board the *Geraldine* that night, for she would put to sea at dawn. As they strolled in the Park, he gave Geraldine a small gold locket containing a curl of his brown hair, and received in exchange a long bright tress that she had severed for him from her own fair head. Then they returned home. After supper, Geraldine slipped out of the room, and went into Uncle Knight's study. Here Fred sought her for the last tender words of parting. Her tears were

falling very fast as he caught her in his arms, and held her for a few moments tightly clasped to his heart; then he sadly and slowly laid her back in her guardian's easy-chair, bent over her again, whispered a few more words of love, kissed her once more with passionate earnestness, and hurried away. It was the saddest "good-bye" that either Fred or Geraldine had ever known.

CHAPTER XXVII.

REFORMATION.

"TIM, me boy, it's meself that has been a grievous sinner all these years; but, by all the saints in the calendar, I'll be afther turning over a new leaf; an', shure, I'll do what ye wish, and come and hear ye spake the night, and listen to what ye have to say for the pledge, at all at all; though, shure, I need not listen to ye to be tould it's a good thing, for don't I mind well what the blessed praist said to me years ago. Och hone! if I had kept his pledge and the gould medal, I would niver have come to this pass, nor would me poor Ellen neither. We would not have laid me little darlint girl in the could earth so soon. Och, thin, but it was a poor day's work when I took the whisky between me lips."

It is always a good sign when a man feels that his own sin has ruined him—when he lays the blame not on the shoulders of this man, or that drink, but acknowledges that he has himself fallen; and it is better still when this experience of weakness is accompanied by a

desire, however faint, to redeem the past — as far as possible—by a better future. Tim rejoiced—like the good son that he was—to hear his father's words.

"Shure, father," he said, in reply, "it's niver too late to mend; and if you take the pledge agin to-night, and we can only win mother to do the same when she comes home next!"

"Och, thin, if ye *will* be able to do *that*," groaned Timothy Maloney.

"Don't let us lose hope, father," said Tim. "Darlint Nelly tould me niver to leave off thryin' to win her back, and I niver mean to. I feel sometimes as if the little angel will be smilin' down upon us if iver the mother's feet are turned into the right paths agin."

Half an hour later, father and son were in the crowded Band of Hope meeting in Candlemas Alley; it always was crowded, and not by children only, when Tim was announced to speak; his pleasant, good-humoured style, the raciness of his wit, the full, clear tones of his ringing voice, the pathos of some of his anecdotes, the fun of others, the real ability that was manifest through all his words, and the pains he took to say what was worth being said, all combined to render his speeches both useful and popular. The cordial reception, the loud stamping of feet, and the pleasant cheer from young voices that greeted "our Tim," seemed to somewhat astonish Timothy Maloney. There was a broad smile on his face as, after dropping into a seat, he watched his boy—the young orator—walk with his light, quick step through the aisle between the closely packed seats, and mount the platform. There he shook hands with Mr.

Knight, the chairman for the evening; and with Mr. Waterhouse, and the other gentlemen around. Minnie Christie was on a visit to Woburn Square, and she and Geraldine sat together on the front seat. Perhaps their presence, and the knowledge that his father's future—in some measure, at least—might depend upon the words he uttered that night, inspired our young Irishman, for never had he spoken so well, never had he so completely moved his audience. He stood before them the frank, honest, generous, droll lad he had ever been; his intelligent face glowing, his red hair tossed back from his broad white forehead, his blue eyes now sparkling with fun, now moist with tears; but, added to all this, was a depth of manly strength in his language, a dignity and force in every pointed sentence, that stirred their hearts, and made them wonder both at him and at themselves. Truly, oratorical power is a wondrous, glorious, mighty gift—a gift to be held with reverence, and used with earnestness and nobility of purpose. When one man can sway a multitude with the magic charm of his voice, and manner, and language—when his eloquence can kindle them to enthusiasm in the service of truth, or stir their passions to tumult in a bad cause,—he may well tremble at the power he wields, as well as rejoice at his opportunities for usefulness. Tim felt something of this that night in Candlemas Alley. He had about four hundred people in the hall, which had always seemed well filled by three hundred; but they sat almost breathless as he pictured the misery drink causes amongst the little children; and before he had finished, the tears were rolling down from eyes unused to weep; and strong men

gazed at him—great sobs shaking their large frames—as they recalled the dead little ones whom their sin had blighted and sent to early graves. Oh, how Tim pleaded then; with what marvellous sweetness the low, soft tones of his voice penetrated every heart; the unhealed sorrow of his own grief for his lost "darlint" melted and moved all who heard him.

"Och, thin," Timothy Maloney said to himself, as he sat trembling like a child, with thoughts of the past around him—"och, thin, but he's a jewel of a boy, and tears up the secrets of me heart more than iver the father confessor himself would have the power to do. The Lord have mercy on me."

Then, like a flash of sunshine after a thunderstorm, Tim's wit painted smiles on every face, and provoked merry, hearty laughter; and then he paused, changed his tone to one of extreme solemnity, and closed with an earnest appeal to all present—as immortal beings—not to trifle any longer with a sin which must provoke the just anger of a holy God.

Mr. Knight rose after a few moments of vociferous cheering, and invited the people to sign the pledge. Many responded to the call — amongst them was Timothy Maloney. From that hour a new life opened before the once dissolute Irishman. He longed to break off from his former associates; and he soon learned that the old proverb was true, "Heaven helps those who help themselves." Now that he was determined to be a sober man, Messrs. Knight and Christie were perfectly willing to find him employment; and after a few weeks of trial in a menial capacity, appointed him warehouse-

man—a situation which brought him a comfortable income for the needs of the small family now dependent upon him, had his wife been as sober as himself; but the habit of years, in poor Ellen Maloney, she seemed to find it impossible to overcome. Her sense of propriety and decency was gone; she was careless, reckless of everything, save the refilling of her spirit-bottle. Neither the discovery of her long-lost daughter, the death of little Nelly, nor the reformation of her husband, seemed to have the least power to turn her from her besetting sin. Yet Tim kept his promise to his dying sister. He pleaded with her, he would not weary of her, he tried very hard not to feel disgust at her because of her low vicious habits, he acted as a good son—a Christian son—alone could do to so debased a parent; and Tim's own character was beautified a thousandfold by this charity, and tenderness, and compassion for his erring mother. Unconsciously to himself, he was growing visibly in the sight of his friends, in the divine life, in the nearness to the great Master, who, Himself farthest removed from the least taint of sin, was yet nearest of all to the helpless, hopeless sinner.

Tim felt especially grieved—on his father's account—at the discomfort of their home. He tried hard to supply, in some measure, the mother's place, by employing the eldest daughter of poor Biddy Simmons to keep the rooms clean, and to prepare their meals. But after a few weeks, Ellen Maloney came home intoxicated, and found the child, as she declared, "set to spy over her things." She flew into a furious passion, and turned her out with much violence. There was another difficulty.

The characters of Michael and Peter grew worse instead of better; and though they were often absent from home for many weeks at a time, yet, when they did return to Tyler's Court, their coarse brutality, their idle vagabond habits, their drinking, and smoking, and swearing, made the place a pandemonium to the sober father and son.

"It's all thrue enough, Tim," Timothy Maloney would say, while a careworn look sat on his troubled face—"thrue enough that ye read out of the blessed gospel, 'As a man soweth, so will he also reap.' It's a wonder to meself how *ye* have grown up into a man for any fayther to be proud of, when I think of the bringing-up ye had."

"An' I would niver have done it at all at all, if it hadn't been for the Band of Hope an' the school," said Tim, humbly. "It's not in meself, fayther; an' I wish Mike and Peter would have gone to the meetin's with me, to get the same good."

Perhaps the worst trial that the reformed drunkard had to bear, was when his dissolute wife robbed him of the clothes and comforts he gradually managed to get around him—to spend the money she obtained for them in drink; and there seemed to be no way of meeting the artful contrivances by which she got them into her hands. The dresses and bonnets he at first purchased for her with lavish generosity, all went to the pawn-shop, till, in hopeless despair, he vowed he would buy no more. And then she stealthily got possession of his Sunday suit—buying a key to unlock little Nelly's room, where it was kept. This room she also rifled of her dead child's books, and many a little treasure that had

been most carefully cherished by Tim. Her frightful appetite for drink perpetually cried, like the "daughters of the horse-leech, Give, give."

Tim feared sadly that his father's constancy would fail him under these repeated trials. But the reformation in Timothy Maloney was complete; and Tim watched over him, month after month, with trembling joy and affectionate solicitude, keeping him with himself of an evening, and away from his former haunts of dissipation and vice, till the good principle was firmly established, and life began to unfold its duties and responsibilities before his re-awakened mind.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

KNIGHT'S TEMPERANCE COLLEGE.

JUST a year after the departure of the *Geraldine*, the foundation-stone of the College was laid. It had taken some months to mature plans, to find a site, to negotiate for its purchase, and then to arrange for the erection of the building. A piece of land had been chosen in the neighbourhood of Putney, with a small farm attached, and, in the distance, a pleasant view of the winding river; and, further away still, the gentle slope of the Surrey hills.

Mr. Knight had decided, after much deliberation with Mr. Waterhouse, that the cost of the living, education, and training of each of the young men, should be estimated at fifty pounds a-year. He invested, on behalf of the college, a sum which would realize for it an income of five hundred pounds a-year, and was thereby entitled to the choice of six students—all members of Bands of Hope—to whom the advantages of the College would be gratuitous. The other six were either to pay

the required sum, or to be appointed by one of the managing directors—whose donation to the College for his term of office should never be less than fifty pounds per annum. The course of instruction embraced the classics, modern languages, physiology, and the plainer but not less necessary studies included in the words, "sound English education." It was Mr. Knight's aim to do away with such falsified notions of learning as might lead a good classical scholar to be so ignorant or unpractised in the art of caligraphy as to be scarcely able to sign his name in a legible hand. In addition to these studies, the art of oratory, in so far as it *is* something to be *acquired*, was to be diligently practised; and the students were to be taught to read aloud without mumbling, and in a clear, distinct, expressive manner. For out-door occupations, there was the farm to be cultivated, and boating on the river, and every aid was to be given to those who might evince literary, artistic, musical or botanical propensities. The term of residence in the College was not to be for less than three, nor more than five years; and the age of each student was to be at least eighteen years. These preliminaries being arranged, and the masons busy at work on the building, Mr. Knight sought in his mind for a suitable superintendent and housekeeper; but for a long time sought in vain. One day he called Mr. Philp into his private office. "Sit down, Philp. I want a gossip. How many sisters have you?"

Mr. Philp opened his eyes in some astonishment, and looked with a puzzled expression at Mr. Knight.

"I have three sisters, sir; two of them are married.

One resides with my mother and myself; but she is employed every morning in teaching."

"Has she a handsome salary? Excuse my apparent rudeness."

"Not very, sir; thirty-five pounds a-year."

"Does she like her work?"

"Pretty well, sir."

"Is your mother equal to any exertion?"

"She attends to the duties of our little housekeeping, sir; it is not very much, you know."

"They are good teetotallers?"

"Oh yes, sir; as thorough as I am. I don't think any one can be *more* so," said Mr. Philp, with a beaming smile.

"Very good. The fact of the matter is this, Philp, I need some one to be a lady housekeeper for my young men at the College; I want a home-life for them there, to which they may in some measure be admitted. If you had been married, I should at once have asked you and Mrs. Philp junior to take the post; as you are not, do you think your mother and sister would accept it. I think it might be more worth while for your sister than teaching; and she would be all the time under the same roof as your mother, a pleasanter thing for both. The salary I have to offer to such a family as yours for residing at the College, superintending the housekeeping and the household, caring for the students in any temporary ailment, and all those little duties that come so naturally to good, well-trained women, is a hundred a-year and house-rent. *You* would still be my clerk; I can't spare you in that capacity, Philp: I have no one, particularly

when I lose Tim, that I can trust as I can you. But you might give some of your time to these young men, on Sundays particularly: accompany them to their meetings; conduct family-worship morning and evening; and act as father of the household generally. If your sister would prefer it, we might arrange to pay her income separately, as lady-superintendent; or your mother may, if she will, take that title, and your sister aid her."

"My mother is less executive than Jessie," said Mr. Philp, musingly, "but her judgment is excellent. Together, I think they could do the work required admirably; and I am sure they will feel very grateful, as I do, too, sir, for your kind offer."

"Talk it over with them, Philp, and let me know your answer next week."

The answer was most heartily in the affirmative; and this difficulty being disposed of, Mr. Knight looked round for a farmer to manage the little estate, and to live at the prettily-constructed lodge at the main entrance to the College. His cogitations on this head were made known to Geraldine and Tim, as they sat at tea with him one evening in Woburn Square.

"Tim, do you think your father still likes farm-work better than any other?"

"Yes, sir, I do indeed."

"I have been thinking of asking him to manage the College farm for me; and wondering, Tim, whether, if we set your mother down in a new place, amongst new associations and new faces, giving her fresh work to do, whether it might possibly wean her from the drink, whether we *could* get her to sign, and begin a new life.

I have no hope whatever for her if she tampers in the slightest degree with the bottle; but it would be such a chance of reformation as she has never had before."

"And we would all try to help her to persevere," said Geraldine, earnestly. "Oh, Uncle Knight, how kind, how good you are to think of it!"

"It may be the making of her intirely," Tim said, thoughtfully. "Shure, Mr. Knight, we will never be able to thank ye for all ye've thought of and done for us; and as for the fayther, he will be rejoiced and happy, and made a new man of amongst the fields and trees, and in the sweet counthry life."

"You will be near them, too, Tim, to help in any little difficulty. I shall look to you as my own right hand in the College, and I feel sure you will not disappoint me."

"Yer honour's too kind," said Tim; "but it's meself that will do all in my power to show me gratitude. And how little I thought that I would iver have the training to be a raal temperance orator; it's been me day-dream for years, Mr. Knight."

Timothy Maloney was no less overjoyed than his son for him at the situation offered to him; and many very pleasant anticipations encircled Knight's Temperance College as it slowly rose, day by day, before the admiring eyes of all onlookers. It became naturally a pet scheme of the good merchant, to be left as a legacy of his affection to his country, and to evince the interest he felt in her progress towards all the varied forms and phases of *Truth*.

Long before the handsome building was finished, applications poured in from the friends of would-be

students, requesting copies of the rules, and to be permitted to hope that their sons, nephews, or *protégés* might be amongst the favoured twelve.

"Knight's Temperance College," built of fair white stone, its broad front adorned by a colonnade supported by graceful Corinthian pillars, was a building of which any neighbourhood might have been proud. There was something to please the most artistic eye in its beautiful, though somewhat massive, proportions; its simple but chaste ornaments; and its fine situation on a gentle slope, with a clump of stately elms near the house, and a far-sweeping lawn in front. The lodge, which stood just within the handsome stone porch and elaborately wrought entrance gates, was an elegant little house, also of white stone, and almost as fair and pretty as a Grecian temple.

Inside the College, the rooms were large, airy, and commodious. The library, which opened out on the garden at one end of the colonnade, was in itself a temptation to be studious: the book-shelves that lined the walls were relieved at either corner of the room by beautiful groups of statuary; over the mantel-shelf there hung a life-size likeness of Thomas Knight, merchant, founder of the College; and on either side of him, an exquisite water-colour drawing of some sweet English landscape—one the work of Miss Cornelia Knight, the other of Geraldine; a piano and a harmonium, and delightfully easy chairs in all varieties of patterns, with two handsome desks in the centre of the room, completed its furniture. The small suite of private apartments for Mrs. Philp and her son and daughter were at the same

end of the house as the library; the large room, into which windows opened from the colonnade, was the dining-hall and general rendezvous of the students; over it were twelve bed-rooms of moderate size, but fitted with every comfort; at the back of the house were kitchens, store-rooms, and a small lecture-hall, in which the tyros in oratory were to try their skill; and into which might be invited, at every suitable opportunity, their friends and neighbours from the neighbouring town. Here also were to meet on Sundays the Bible classes, which Mr. Knight proposed should be held by the young students, amongst those men and boys of Putney who were willing to walk nearly a mile into the country for the sake of instruction. Another three months, and Knight's Temperance College would be ready to receive its occupants; but before that time how much that would sadly affect his hopes and prospects, was to happen to our young friend Tim.

CHAPTER XXIX.

MICHAEL'S FATE.

TIM sat late at night by the fire in his father's room in Tyler's Court; he held a book in his hand, but he was not reading, he was thinking hopefully of the future. Through all his troubles, Tim had never lost that blessing to its possessor, a cheerful, hopeful spirit, and as it appeared to him, things looked brighter now than they had ever done before. Not when he thought of his mother. Alas! it *did* feel difficult to hope much on her account, though he was somewhat sanguine as to the result of an entire change of neighbourhood and circumstances. His younger brothers, too, were a great care to him; he could not account for their having so much money as they often appeared to have, save by very disreputable means. But looking at the pleasant side of life, he had, he felt with a throb of grateful praise and love to his heavenly Father, very much to be thankful for. His father was now a sober, steady man; a man with whom his son could take counsel, and whose company he

could enjoy, and Tim glanced, as these thoughts passed through his mind, at the bed on the opposite side of the room, where Timothy Maloney now lay sleeping peacefully. Pat was doing well in Canada with his uncle, and about to be married to his cousin, and to settle down on a plot of ground of his own. Then for himself: the great aim and wish of his life would soon be realized, for Knight's Temperance College was almost completed, and in a few more weeks he should be in it, preparing himself for that great field of usefulness in the temperance cause which long ago he had aspired to labour in. He had another secret but cherished cause for congratulation in the interest Minnie Christie had, of late, taken in his plans for the future, and in the pleasure she had expressed that the College was so near her home at Putney. Tim was elaborating to himself, as lovers are wont to do, the meaning of every kind word and look from the pleasant face of the merchant's daughter, when a slight noise at the door made him look round.

"Mike," he said in surprise, "how late ye are, my boy;" but there was an expression that frightened him on his brother's face.

"I've got meself into a scrape, don't ye peach on me, Tim," he said in a terrified whisper, as he passed his sleeping father, and drew near to the fireplace; but he kept his hands well down in the pockets of his trousers, and avoided fronting Tim.

"What have ye been doing, Mike?" asked Tim; "ye had betther tell me all about it."

The lad swore a fierce oath, but he still spoke in a suppressed tone.

"Ye had betther go to bed, hadn't ye?" asked Tim.

"Ye'll not be afther letting me go into yer own room?" questioned Mike, and as he spoke he looked at his brother.

Tim started with horror, for he saw plainly that Mike had had a desperate fight; one side of his face was scratched and bruised and bleeding, and a small portion of the lobe of his ear was gone, as if bitten off. "Mike, ye must be suffering dreadfully," he said; "come with me to my room, and I will docthor you."

"I don't desarve that ye would care a bit about me," said the youth; "arrah, thin, if ye knew all, Tim, ye would just let me die, if I would."

"I think not," Tim answered, gently; "I hope I would do a kindness to any one, and much more to a brother I love."

So they walked softly out of the room into Tim's own apartment, where, having brought some warm water, Tim tenderly and carefully bathed the wounds of his brother, then wrapped his face in a soft pocket-handkerchief from his drawer, and helped him into his own bed, for Mike was faint and sick with loss of blood and the miserable struggle in which he had been engaged, regarding which, however, he maintained a dogged and impenetrable silence.

"Don't ye peach on me, Tim," he said again very earnestly, as his brother quitted the room, after bringing him a glass of warm milk; "if they come for me, say I'm not in yet, and I will not be comin' maybe for a day or two, *will* ye?"

"Mike," said Tim, and he turned his honest, pleasant

face towards his brother, as he spoke, "I'll niver be able to tell a lie for anybody, I hope; but I'll shield ye all I can. Go to sleep now, if ye're able; and to-morrow we'll see more about it, and have the docthor to ye."

Tim went back to his seat by the fire and to his book. All had been done so quietly that his father had not roused from his peaceful sleep, but there could be no more quiet thought on pleasant subjects for poor Tim that night; he was full of anxious questionings concerning his brother. A quarter of an hour later, the door of the room was pushed hurriedly open, and two policemen entered; after staring at Tim, they went first to the bed. "Napping, eh?" and then drew back in surprise. "Doesn't Michael Maloney live here?" asked one of them of Tim.

"Yes."

"What's your name?"

"I am Timothy Maloney, own brother to Michael."

"*You* Mike Maloney's brother? you don't look like it," said one with a shrug; "some trick," he muttered.

"No trick whatever, policeman," said Tim civilly; "that is my father asleep in the bed."

"And where is the man we want, Mike Maloney?"

Tim hesitated.

"He has been here?" they asked.

"He has."

"Come, come, young man; if you're as respectable as you look, you won't want to hinder us in the execution of our duty."

"Better for himself that he shouldn't, too," growled his companion, "when murder is the business."

"Murder!" Tim's face grew white with terror and anguish; "murder! my brother?"

"And you don't know where he is?"

Tim never felt so tempted to tell a lie in all his life. Could it be wrong to save his brother, perhaps from a horrible death on the gallows, even at the expense of truth? Satan is artful, and often to the pure-hearted Christian "transforms himself into an angel of light."

At that moment the father sat up in his bed, and stared in some surprise at the intruders: they had reached the door that opened into Tim's room.

"What's in here?"

"A bedroom," Tim answered, through his parched lips. They opened the door and entered. In Tim's bed—his face almost as colourless as the handkerchief wrapped around his head—lay Mike Maloney asleep; but at the noise of footsteps he started up in horror, with wide open eyes, and lips apart, and hands outstretched. Tim would never forget his brother's young face, out of which hope, and youth, and joy seemed for ever to have flown.

"Here you are at last, you villain," said one of the policemen, as he proceeded to handcuff the wretched lad. "You've given us trouble enough to catch you, but you're in safe hands now."

"Mike," said Tim, going up to him, and laying his hand tenderly on his shoulder—"Mike, my boy, whatever throuble ye are in, I'll do all I can for ye.—He's in sore pain," he added, turning to the policemen. "Give him time to dress himself. I'll help him. Ye need not

fear me; I'd scorn to prevint any man from doing his duty."

Tim's fearless manner and honourable words prevailed. The policemen stood on one side while Tim assisted Mike. But they watched attentively every movement between the brothers.

"Mike, ye had betther have tould me all," Tim said affectionately.

"Tould ye I had murthered a man?" questioned Mike excitedly, and with an oath.

"Hush! hush! Mike."

"Look alive, can't ye?" said the policeman.

Meanwhile, Timothy Maloney, in dreadful bewilderment, sat up in his bed, waiting for the explanation of the terrible scene.

"What will it all mane?" he said at last to the two men.

"Mean? Why, it means that that precious son of yours got drinking and fighting to-night at the 'George,' and killed a man in cold blood; almost, as one may say, a man that had not touched him; and then ran away like a sneak, giving us the slip, and dodging about till he came here. He's born to be hanged, is that youth, as sure as my name's William Brown."

The father made no answer, but gazed earnestly at his unfortunate son.

"Mike," said he, "I'm raal sorry for ye."

The lad did not speak, but walked away sulkily with the two policemen.

Next day he was brought before the magistrates, and committed for trial on a charge of manslaughter. The

account of it was one paragraph amongst many in the day's paper which recorded the evils wrought by strong drink; but underneath those few words what heart-sorrow, what misery, what disappointment were hidden. Tim's bright hopes had faded; Mike's disgrace seemed to be reflected on himself. How could he ever dream of asking Minnie Christie to unite herself to the brother of a murderer? And Geraldine shrank with horror from the perusal of that bloody fray, and hid her frightened face on Tim's shoulder, as he told her the story of Mike's appearance the night before in Tyler's Court. Tim did not forsake his guilty brother—he visited him in prison; while father and son joined in the expense of employing counsel on his behalf; but the facts of the case were plain. Mike, in wild, furious, drunken anger, had struck, not only at the man who had fought and injured him, but at a quiet, inoffensive customer at the "George," who thus paid with his life for the false pleasure of making one of a drinking party. Drunkenness was, of course, not allowed as a plea in extenuation of Mike's crime, but considered rather as an aggravation of it; and after the trial, fourteen years of penal servitude was the doom that was recorded, in open court, against Tim's brother.

The parting between the brothers was a very sorrowful one.

"Mike," said Tim, as he walked up and down the narrow cell, with his arm locked in that of his brother—"Mike, it will seem to ye a never-ending time; but if ye *will* but do yer duty even now—if ye will but turn from yer sins, and look to Christ for forgiveness, He'll receive ye, and forgive ye, and all will be well. O Mike! I've

been thinkin' that perhaps I haven't done all that I might have done to lead ye right; perhaps I haven't coaxed ye enough to walk in the narrow way; I haven't showed ye enough how happy it made meself to thry and do me duty to God and man, because God loved us, and sent His Son to die for us. Mike, will ye forgive me that I have not been a better brother to ye?"

"Tim, don't ye be afther talkin' like that at all at all," said Mike. "Shure, an' I had yer example and yer counsel, all the right way, and I wouldn't take either. Ye've nothing to reproach yerself wid, Tim; it's all me own fault, and the fault of the dhrink-shops tempting and tempting to go asthray—and then they punish us for going," he added bitterly. "Shure, an' there s somethin' wrong in the whole business. If it's wrong to dhrink and get dhrunk, and do what the divil tempts ye to do when ye *are* dhrunk; it will be wrong, too, to set the dhrink up for sale—and to put the music going, and the pretty girls behind the counter to tempt ye in. Tim, ye had betther thry and see it all righted, will ye?" Mike paused, then he went on: "Perhaps, afther all, Tim, if the mother had been different, we would have had a happy home, and it might have been the savin' of Peter and me; and yet, I know ye will say, or ye might say, Tim, *ye* didn't go wrong for the want of that same. I will not be able to explain it; but I'm here, and for fourteen years I'll be a slave, and not my own masther at all at all;" and Mike's impatient spirit chafed at this thought, and he strode up and down fiercely.

"Ye'll niver put the dhrink inside of yer lips again, Mike; promise me that."

"I don't mane to, Tim. Yes, I'll promise ye."

"And ye will read the Bible every day; one verse, if no more; will ye, Mike?"

"Will it be in the beautiful little Bible Geraldine giv'd to me yesterday? I'll do it; I promised her the same."

Geraldine, accompanied by Mr. Knight, had paid a visit to the prison to see her degraded brother, and had left him at parting a handsome Bible, marked throughout in many places, by her own hands, at the texts she thought appropriate to her brother's need; she had tried, too, to say a few words of loving counsel and sympathy, but had broken down utterly in the attempt, and had, perhaps, not made a less powerful impression on Mike by her sad face and tearful eyes than words could have done.

"Time is up, sir," said the jailer to Tim. Tim turned to his brother, an intense expression of loving tenderness and mercy in his gaze.

"Good-bye, then, Mike; we don't know whether we shall ever meet on earth again—fourteen years is such a long time; so many things may happen to us in fourteen years—but meet me in heaven, Mike."

"Tim, forgive me," sobbed Mike, broken down by the look on his brother's face and the loving words from his brother's lips. "Forgive me; and tell Peter, when he comes home, that I said he was to mind whatever ye said to him—poor little Pete, he just follows me like a dog; 'tis me own fault he's such a bad 'un; ye'll look afther him, Tim?"

Tim promised. Once more the brothers were clasped in each other's arms—once more with yearning tender-

ness Tim besought Mike to remember his promises; "an' think," he added, "of the little darlint Nelly when ye feel tempted to break them. Shure, it would grieve her sore to have ye shut out of heaven. Mike, Mike, good-bye!" And so, with an effort, Tim tore himself away; and as he walked slowly, lingeringly out of the cell, their eyes once more met,—it was for the last time in this world.

CHAPTER XXX.

MINNIE CHRISTIE.

IT is time that we introduced the grown-up Minnie Christie, Geraldine's dearest companion from childhood, to all Tim's friends; for of late, as we have seen, his heart had enshrined her as the type of what to him was "fairest, sweetest, best." Love, it is universally admitted, idealises and beautifies the beloved one, tones down imperfections if it does not hide them, makes excuses for faults, "covers a multitude of sins;" but love had not very hard work to accomplish for Minnie Christie; singularly amiable and gentle, yet with a persevering, much-accomplishing determination of purpose, her character was alike free from dulness on the one hand, and from Geraldine's high-spirited gaiety on the other. She was naturally quiet and thoughtful, and, as a child, almost morbidly conscientious; her mother's ill-health had early laid upon her much of the care of her younger brothers and sisters, and she had very faithfully and lovingly fulfilled this trust. The friendship of Geraldine had been very serviceable to

Minnie, as also had the example of Minnie been invaluable to Geraldine, preserving in both the pleasant medium between undue gaiety in one and undue carefulness in the other. Yet, in spite of her quiet disposition, there was a spice of humour in Minnie, inherited from her father, and since her closer acquaintance with Tim this appreciation of a keen, racy drollery of thought had been much augmented.

"Minnie is a far merrier girl than she used to be," Mr. Christie said to his wife one evening; "she is like good wine—she improves by keeping."

"My dear, that is a simile Minnie would not admire," said Mrs. Christie, smiling.

"Admire or not, it applies," rejoined Mr. Christie. "Look at her now, Mary; why, she really enjoys such fun at the mature age of twenty-two as our sedate little puss of seventeen hardly relished."

From the window they could see Minnie and Tim engaged amusing the children in a merry game, themselves, apparently, no less happy than the little ones.

"When Tim is in the way, she is generally light-hearted and happy," said Mrs. Christie.

"Yet Tim is hardly high enough up the social ladder to think of our Minnie as a wife," remarked the father.

"Why not, dear? Should you seriously refuse your consent, Edward?" the mother's tone grew earnest—the father frowned; "if you would, I shall feel we have done *very* wrongly to allow them to be so much together."

"That was a very ugly business about his brother."

said Mr. Christie; "I should think he would hardly feel justified in looking above his own station now."

"It surely is not fair to punish Tim for an action over which he had not the slightest control, and against which all the principles and practice of his life are in immediate opposition; besides, Edward, feeling as Minnie and I do, we think that poor Michael's career was but the natural outcome of so much drink and neglect."

"But Tim is different himself, my dear."

"Of course he is, because he put himself under influences that have helped him to rise superior to that terrible position in which he was placed. The Bands of Hope, and Ragged Schools, and night schools are the levers which the poor children of the drunkards *must* seize and hold fast, if they would ever hope to be lifted from their misery. All of them have not the courage to begin, nor perseverance to continue, in the right course; and I, for one, cannot wonder at this. I know how difficult it was for me to give up my glass of wine, when I first felt it my duty to be a teetotaller; I can't be surprised at children lacking moral strength to reform their bad habits and to do the right, when they have no one at home to help them, no one to direct them. I think Tim's history a very noble one."

"How well Tim ingratiates himself with the ladies," said Mr. Christie, smiling; "however, my dear, it will be time enough to discuss him in relation to our Minnie when he formally proposes."

"Oh, I don't think so, Edward," said the mother, warmly; "it will be cruel indeed of us, now that in a week or two he will be our near neighbour at the College,

to allow him to come here freely as he has done, and to allow Minnie to be with him as she is, unless we are prepared to sanction their love."

"My dear," asked Mr. Christie, with an amused smile, "has Minnie employed you as special pleader on Tim's behalf?"

"Indeed she has not," replied the lady, also smiling; "I am not even *quite* sure she would say Yes to Tim; but when we women have loved truly, as I have done—" and Mrs. Christie glanced archly at her husband.

"Are you alluding, my dear, to your feelings with regard to myself?" asked Mr. Christie, comically.

"Of course I am, and you know it," she said, placing her thin wasted hand on her husband's knee, as he sat opposite to her beside the open window; he clasped it affectionately.

"What was I going to say?" continued Mrs. Christie. "Oh, I know now. Yes, I cannot help believing that I read our dear child's heart aright; she never seems to care for the company of any other young man, not even, my dear"—and again Mrs. Christie looked at her husband with an amused glance—"not even the rich young cotton lord you introduced to her last week."

"You don't give me much chance for match-making, Mary," laughed Mr. Christie; "you women have it all pretty much your own way down here; one thing Minnie must know, a cotton lord could give her rather a different mansion to what a temperance lecturer could afford, even if he is, what I grant Tim is sure to be, a first-class spouter; then, too, he won't be out from this College of Knight's (what a fanatic my respected partner has become!)

for three years, and that is too long for an engagement, much too long."

"Not so long as *we* waited, dear," suggested Mrs. Christie.

"And I know I thought *that* a confoundedly disagreeable piece of business. I speak from experience, Mary, when I say long courtships are *very* injurious things to the temper."

Mrs. Christie laughed merrily. "But *you* could not see me almost every day, as Tim could Minnie."

"All the worse, my dear, all the worse; he would be hankering after her the more, and Minnie would be next to useless as housekeeper, and schoolmistress, and what not."

Outside, in the summer-house of the pretty garden, another conversation was being held. The nursemaid had called in the children to go to bed, and Tim and Minnie had sat down to discuss a book they had both been reading; the hero of the novel had forsaken the woman he loved on account of the discovery that her father had committed forgery.

"I don't think he did the right," said Tim, musingly; "because her name would have been changed, and it was his duty, having promised to love her, to shield her from all sorrow as far as possible; but such a thing, under slightly different circumstances, would seem to me the only honourable course."

"How? for instance," asked Minnie, painfully conscious that the blood rushed to her face as Tim spoke.

Tim looked at her, and then quickly turned his head before he answered her. Minnie had never looked so

lovely and loving to his earnest gaze, as now that he thought he must relinquish her perhaps for ever—her soft brown hair was beautifully braided; her dark gray eyes were intelligent and kind; her small, exquisitely-formed mouth was settled into an expression of sweet, earnest gravity; and her other features, though by no means perfect, made up a *tout ensemble* that was womanly, simple, sincere; while the soft, peach-like colour that came and went so quickly on the rounded cheek, was a tell-tale index to her loving heart.

"It would be very wrong," Tim said, still keeping his eyes away from her face, "to allow a woman you loved to bear a name that had been stained by the disgrace of one very nearly related to you."

Poor Tim, he was a bad reasoner now, and fluent as he was, stammered, and felt utterly unable to place the case before her as one entirely distinct from his own. He had so plainly alluded to Michael's fate that Minnie also was increasingly confused. With almost a feeling of desperation at her heart, and burning cheeks, she spoke again: "I think that, too, may depend on circumstances." When the words were out, Minnie felt frightened at her own boldness; nay, she feared it was worse; she coloured more deeply still, and her heart beat violently, but Tim's gave a wild throb of pleasure.

"Minnie," he said, and he took her little hand in his, cold now with the excessive agitation of her feelings, and chafed it between his own—"Minnie, dear Minnie, do you give me lave to think that possible? Och, mavourneen," and Tim relapsed, as he always did when excited, into his Hibernian accent and style of speech; "och.

thin, but will ye be afther giving Tim Maloney lave to love ye, though he *is* brother to a felon, and that same poor Mike; shure now, me darlint," and Tim's arm encircled the waist of Minnie Christie, and drew the fair young head on to his shoulder—"shure now, if ye can but say, 'I love ye, Tim,' this'll be the brightest, fairest day I will have ever known to rise. Och, Minnie darlint, there have been many throubles and many clouds in the sky of me life, but this bit of the goulden sunshine will make up for all: *can* ye say it, mavourneen?" and Tim was gazing down into his companion's eyes with a strangely glowing brightness in his own. She hid her face from him then, but it was on his shoulder, and her faintly-whispered words were those of timid love. He clasped her to his heart, kissed again and again those sweet lips in a perfect transport of joy: "Och, shure thin, it's what I niver expected at all at all." She rose from his side, and with one shy turn of her pretty head, let him read for a moment her heart's love in her face, and hurried from him towards the house by a hidden pathway between a laurel hedge. Tim, in the little summer-house, watched her till she was out of sight, then bowed his face upon his hands, and whispered to himself, as the natural outburst of an overflowing heart, "Praise God, from whom all blessings flow." His next thought was of the joy of little Nelly, if she could know the happiness he felt. "Shure, and wouldn't it be afther making heaven itself a little bit *more* heaven, to know her Tim was glad?" Soon he realized, in some slight measure, but he was too full of delight to do it thoroughly, the obligations which his new-found treasure imposed upon him. He went up

the main path through the garden towards the house, and Minnie's parents, still seated by the window, espied him.

"Where is Minnie, Tim?" asked Mr. Christie, from the open window, as Tim drew near.

"She will have come into the house by the other path, sir," answered Tim, in some little confusion.

Mr. Christie looked meaningly at his wife. "Had a few words and parted, eh, Tim?"

"Yes; but to meet again, yer honour, very soon, and in pace;" the happy turn of his reply, and his droll, merry face, set Mr. Christie laughing.

"Come in, come in, Tim, and give what account you can of yourself and Miss Minnie."

Tim entered.

"It's meself that's afraid ye will think I have taken a desperate liberty, Mr. Christie," said Tim, blushing now to the roots of his hair, and glad of the deepening twilight, that prevented his listeners from marking him too closely; "for I've done what I niver thought I would dare to do, especially lately"—and Tim's voice grew husky—"and asked her to love me, Mrs. Christie and yer honour."

"Well?"

Poor Tim, that solitary word, spoken so dryly by Minnie's father, made him dreadfully uncertain of the reception of his love. He felt the glow fade from his face, but he said, with a resolve to work his way through, now he had come so far, "Miss Minnie has been good enough not to repulse me, sir."

"Oh, young ladies manage these things now-a-days without the medium of cross-grained papas and mammas;

they throw their parents overboard in all these *affaires du cœur*, as they call them."

Tim did not answer—he was both pained and mortified; but he was not long kept in suspense.

"My dear, this is not quite honest of you," said Mrs. Christie's pleasant voice. "Tim, Mr. Christie does not mean to find any fault with you; he is not surprised that you admire and love our darling child."

"*Don't* I find fault with him?—DON'T I?" said the merchant, fiercely. "I think I have good reason to find fault with any man who steals my daughter's affections clandestinely, and then boasts of possessing them."

"Shure, not clandestinely, yer honour," said Tim, laughing, now that he saw through Mr. Christie's manner; "for was I not always proud to show meself her admirer, and would have done gladly the manest thing to show me love for her. Och, shure, but she *is* a darlint!"

"Where is she now?" said Mr. Christie. "Why doesn't she come and confess her sin? Why didn't she write over the door of her heart, No Irish need apply?"

"Och, shure, yer honour, because the darlint had more love for the shamrock—the green, immortal shamrock," said Tim, readily.

At this pleasant position of affairs, Mrs. Christie rose to leave the room.

"Bring down the truant, Mary; I want to speak to her," said her husband.

"We will see, dear."

Up the stairs Mrs. Christie walked slowly; but her light step reached the ear of Minnie as she sat beside

her open window, with the new, sweet consciousness in her heart that she was beloved, and by Tim. None had known, save herself, how attentively she had watched his career, how interested she had felt in all his brave struggles with the hardships of his life, how she had sympathized with him in that baptism of sorrow through which he passed after little Nelly died, nor how she admired and felt proud of him as he stood upon the platform to advocate, with his earnest pathos and his exuberant fancy, a cause which the young girl had embraced in her childhood, and her zeal in which had strengthened with every year of her useful, energetic life. Directly Minnie heard her mother, she guessed what Tim had done; she ran to meet Mrs. Christie, and led her into her pleasant chamber, wheeling a low easy-chair to the window. She placed her in it; then closing the door, seated herself on the floor at her feet, with her arm and her bowed head upon the lap of her mother.

The lovely summer sky grew dark, and wore its robe of starry tracery; the bright line of the winding river was distinctly visible through the gloom; the trees on its banks looked sombre, though their outline was rounded and beautiful with their luxuriant summer foliage. In a small bed, beside Minnie's own, was heard the low, soft, regular breathing of a little child—the youngest darling of the Christie family; and through the open window came the sweet fragrance of the roses and clematis, that crept with tiny arms, outspread, around and above Minnie's lattice; the box of mignonette that rested on the ledge outside, added another sweetness to the delicious perfume. As far away as the eye could reach,

the white walls of Knight's Temperance College were visible, the pillars of the colonnade only distinguishable now by the dark shadows between them. For some minutes the mother and daughter sat in silence. They understood each other so well, that words between them often seemed scarcely necessary.

"You are very happy, my darling?" Mrs. Christie said at last, as she laid her hand upon the brow of her child, gathering back two or three locks of hair that had escaped from their accustomed resting-place.

"*So* happy, mamma!"

"Tim is a dear fellow—a noble young man," said Mrs. Christie, cordially. "Papa frightened him a little at first, Minnie."

"How, mamma?" Minnie's tone was rather anxious.

"By making him think he did not approve."

"But papa *does* approve. Doesn't he, mamma?"

"Yes, dear; as much, I think, as he could approve of any one taking away from him his secretary, housekeeper, musician, songstress, chess-player, and companion in general, at one and the same time."

"But, dear mamma, he has *you;* and you are so much better now, so much more able to do things, are you not? And then, you know, I shall not leave you for some time—three years Tim will *have* to be at the College; and then he must get his work to do before we"—Minnie stopped, blushing again, though nobody could see her sweet face in the twilight.

"Before you are married, darling? Yes; and that is a very great comfort to me, my child. I shall get used to the thought before we have to part. I fear

I shall be as cowardly as papa when it comes to the point."

"Dear Tim," said Minnie; "it will be so nice to have him near us. I never thought, mamma, at least," added truthful Minnie, "I never hoped to have so much reason to be glad when I first found we could see the College from my window."

There was silence again. Minnie broke it by saying, "Won't it be nice, mamma, to work with Tim for teetotalism? I think—I trust—we shall be able to 'provoke each other to good works' in this holy cause; it will be just the kind of life we both wished to live, only I don't feel that I work half so purely and generously as Tim."

The mother smiled; and then said in a sweet, solemn voice: "Do all your work to God, my child, and then it will be sure to be done aright. One little wanderer brought into Christ's fold through the instrumentality of the Band of Hope—one drunkard saved by the adult societies, is worth, when one looks at it in the light of eternity, all the effort, all the exertion, all the pains we can possibly take."

"It is, indeed, mamma. Tim would never have been what he is—I suppose; I should never even have known him, if it had not been for temperance. I think *I* have good reason to be thankful to the instrumentality that has saved *him*."

Again the mother smiled; but it was in tenderest sympathy with her daughter's love. "And now, dear Minnie, will you come down with me; papa wishes to see you."

"*Must* I, mamma?" There was a good deal of hesitation in her manner as well as her words.

"I think you had better, dear."

So they went down again into the sitting-room, where Mr. Christie and Tim still sat talking in the pleasant summer twilight. Minnie stole up to her father's side and put her arm around his neck. Mrs. Christie laid herself down on the sofa.

"So, so, Miss Minnie, you've been giving away yourself, have you, without asking your father's leave?"

"I thought I should be sure to have it, papa," whispered Minnie, in the same kind of tone.

"That is what comes of your journey to Paris, I suppose. You learned over there to take 'French leave.' It's a bad, unnational thing, Miss Minnie."

"Not so very bad, papa." Her father pinched her ear.

"It's time this young man went back to London. Haven't you any supper for him, Minnie? A pretty specimen of a wife you'll make."

"For shame, papa," said Mrs. Christie, from the sofa.

"Tim, what do you think of a woman who forgets to get supper for you? Are you in the habit of living upon love? It's thin food, man; and you'll become the very gnost of yourself if you don't take something more substantial inside of you."

Tim laughed. "I will be content to do just as Minnie likes best," he said.

"If young folks live without eating, we old ones can't. Minnie, my dear, will you go and see what there is in the house?"

Minnie escaped very willingly. The supper of poached eggs, strawberries and milk, gooseberry-tart, and cream-cheese, that soon made its appearance, might have tempted the most fastidious appetites; and they all sat down in the merriest of tempers to eat it, which, next to hunger, is the best sauce for every dish; the meal taken in gloomy silence or solemn propriety is not likely to benefit the digestion of any one.

"I never get anything but water at home," said Mr. Christie, in a pathetic tone, as he poured out a glassful of that sparkling beverage and held it to his lips; "never, unless we have a stranger here. I am of a sociable turn, and don't care to drink alone. You may thank your stars, Tim, that you were born under a teetotal planet—"

"Shure, an' they all are," remarked Tim, parenthetically.

"For if you hadn't been," continued Mr. Christie, not heeding the interruption, "you'd have found no favour in *that* young lady's eyes;" and he pointed to his daughter. Minnie blushed still more deeply as her father went on: "Last week I brought home with me to dine as nice a young man as ever I came across, save in your presence, Tim; and I thought he'd be a good sort of a son-in-law; so I introduced him to Miss Minnie, and she got on very well with him before dinner, talking of Manchester, and the cotton operatives, and mills, and one thing and another in his line, that I never dreamed she knew so much about; but when we sat down to dinner, and he poured out his sherry—sherry 'twas, wasn't it, Minnie?"

"No, papa; ale."

"Ale? yes; I sit corrected. However, it's all the same; her nose went quite out of its proper angle to express her scorn; and her lips—why, my dear Minnie, I hardly recognized your pretty little mouth."

"Papa, papa!"

"Truth, Minnie. Well, Tim, that's how the cotton lord got ground to pieces in his own mill; his actions did not please my little lady. And after dinner, before we gentlemen got to the drawing-room, she was off to some Band of Hope festival, or annual meeting, or something. Were *you* there?"

"I hope I had that honour," said Tim, trying to help Minnie's confusion, which was now extreme. "Will it be the Band of Hope rehearsal, Minnie?"

"Yes," said Minnie, smiling and blushing, without looking up.

"You see how matters stand. These fanatical teetotal young ladies will have nothing to do with a man who drinks intoxicating liquors; they predicate *drink*, *drinking*, *death*, as the three degrees of comparison.—What train do you take, Tim?"

"The last, sir."

"And that left Putney Station just three minutes ago," said Mr. Christie, taking out his watch and laughing very heartily at Tim's startled look.

"I will be able to get a bed at the inn, sir."

"I couldn't think of allowing such immorality. A teetotaller taking a bed at a public-house! You ought to be ashamed of yourself, Tim. Minnie will renounce you if you *talk* of such things, much more if you do them

Aren't you equal to emergencies, Minnie? Can't you get a shake-down somewhere for this benighted lover of yours?"

"Papa, you're a dreadful tease."

"Always was, my dear; always shall be. Run away, attend to this little business; let Tim sleep in Tom's bed."

CHAPTER XXXI.

"HE COMETH NOT."

AUTUMN had come again before the inauguration of Knight's Temperance College. There are always so many last things to be done to a new building, inside and outside; besides, Mr. Knight, and Tim, and Geraldine very earnestly hoped for the company of Fred Coleridge at this auspicious ceremony; and the *Geraldine* was now looked for anxiously every day. Fred's last letter spoke hopefully of seeing Geraldine in about three months, and no advices to the contrary had come to hand from Captain Seymour; her cargo was shipped, and they were about to set sail from China when his last letter was written.

The announcement of Minnie Christie's engagement to Tim had given very great satisfaction to Tim's sister. "It was so nice," Geraldine both thought and said, "that she should have Minnie, her dearly loved Minnie, for so near a relative;" but there was naturally a longing in her heart, at sight of their happiness, that Fred might soon arrive to claim her for his own. Minnie, dear loving

Minnie, not knowing how matters stood between Fred and Geraldine, had very innocently contrived, of late, to throw her eldest brother Tom, now just returned from College, and about to enter the Church, into her friend's society; and she encouraged Tom to hope, spite of many very unmistakable repulses, that if he were attentive and persevering he might one day win her. There was another candidate, too, for Geraldine's favour, but one in whose success Minnie certainly would not sympathize—the Harry Maunder who had, as our readers will remember, made himself disagreeably notorious over the wine at one of Geraldine's Christmas parties years before, was now changed into an affected, scented young man, who wearied the only girl he thought pretty enough to mate with such an exquisite as himself, by his elaborate attentions. But though Harry Maunder had dropped the bullying manner of his boyhood for the soft address and elaborate get-up of a lady-killer, the taste which had led him to empty the wine-glass so often then was still in force; and he was accustomed to boast, until he began to seek Geraldine's society, of the number of champagne suppers he attended during "the season."

After a while, the opening of the College could no longer be delayed, and almost reluctantly, with an earnest hope that Fred would after all make his appearance just in time, Geraldine wrote out her uncle's invitations to various clergymen, ministers, influential teetotallers, and other gentlemen and ladies, to the number of one hundred in all, to be present at the banquet in the College dining hall. Tim, and Minnie, and Geraldine, with the help of Tom Christie and Mr. Philp, decorated the hall very

beautifully for the occasion, and choice flowers from conservatories in the neighbourhood were ranged upon the long table in the centre. At the hour of three, on that glowing autumn day, when the bright hues of the surrounding foliage added beauty to the scene, a little group gathered around Mr. Knight as he stood in the colonnade to receive his numerous guests; beside him, her hand resting on his arm, was bright-haired Geraldine, her lovely face a little less sunny than usual, from the influence of that "hope deferred" which now began to oppress her heart whenever she thought of her sailor lover; but it was hard indeed to decide which expression best became those perfect features and soft blue eyes, so fair was she in every mood, in every circumstance. Minnie stood near her, looking very pretty in her perfect, contented happiness; and Tim, we may be sure, was not far off. He stood at the top of the flight of broad white steps that led to the lawn, ready with his gentlemanly *bonhommie* to welcome every visitor who should make his appearance; behind him were ranged the other eleven students, good-looking youths for the most part, with intelligent faces, bright eyes, and broad, high, intellectual brows, but some of them painfully shy in anticipation of the grand arrivals. Carriages were soon heard bowling along the smooth paths, and the greetings became more and more frequent. Many walked from the station, and when they were all assembled, Mr. Knight, with one of the lady visitors, led the way into the spacious dining-hall. Tim acted, at Mr. Knight's request, as vice-president, and on either side of him were seated Minnie Christie and Geraldine, the two young

ladies who, for beauty and sweetness, carried off the palm on that festal day.

It was a very jovial banquet, the fun never seemed to flag. Tim was in the gayest of humours, and if there threatened to be a solemn lull in the conversation, he dispelled it by a flash of wit which "set the table in a roar,"—not a roar of drunken revelry, but of hearty, unmistakable laughter. The speeches — in which were proposed "success to the College," "the health of the founder," and "prosperity to the students"—would bear comparison with the after-dinner speeches of any assembly, however talented; there were fewer repetitions of the unmeaning words that have become stock phrases of public men at public dinners; fewer elaborations of "unexpectedly called upon to rise," "totally unprepared for the honour," and the still more abused, "sir, I rise upon this occasion," than where strong drink has muddled men's brains, or given a senseless celerity to their tongues.

Mr. Knight's short but earnest reply to the kind speech in which all good things had been wished for him, did honour to his warm and manly heart, and made Mr. Waterhouse proud and happy, as he loaded *him* with all the honour of the suggestion and the scheme that was now so happily begun; whilst the way in which Tim answered on behalf of his fellow-students, and wittily and gracefully alluded to the charming presence of the ladies, called forth both cheers and laughter. It was enough to convince the most sceptical, that cheerfulness, mirth, and good-fellowship are not indissolubly linked to intoxicating beverages. The ladies were not banished from this

most merry of feasts, that the "lords of creation" might indulge themselves in unseemly vagaries and gossip over their wine, but after a handsome dessert of "new wine in the cluster," in rich-tinted, tiny skin bottles of God's own perfect handiwork, luscious pomegranates, juicy melons, fair nectarines, soft, delicate-hued peaches, bright golden and purple plums, russet apples, and mellow pears, all rose from table with unabated capacity to enjoy a stroll in the beautiful grounds, to listen to music in the library, or to play at games of billiards and bagatelle in the lecture-hall.

At eight o'clock the guests again assembled, coffee and cake were handed round, all joined in singing a temperance hymn, the national anthem followed, and the proceedings were closed by a prayer from a teetotal archdeacon. Then the carriages rolled away, gentlemen walked off to Putney Station, and the College was formally and very pleasantly inaugurated. The next week the lectures began, and Tim and his fellow-students were full of work.

Month after month passed, and still there were no tidings of the good ship *Geraldine*. Mr. Knight noticed with extreme pain how Geraldine's health and spirits failed, spite of her brave efforts to keep hopeful and cheerful—her blooming cheeks grew pale, her step lost its elasticity, and without any positive malady on which a doctor might seize and work a cure, she was evidently far from well. For a long time she strove to hide her nervousness, her irritability, her want of strength from all save her guardian; but it was impossible to do so for long, and soon after the New Year had dawned Miss

Knight sought her brother's study for a private conversation with him respecting her.

"Tom," she began, "what is the matter with Geraldine —the child grows so thin, and eats hardly anything? Do you think she is really ill, or is there any love-affair going on?"

Mr. Knight paused for a few minutes; he knew his sister's character more perfectly than any one, and he determined, for Geraldine's own sake, to trust her with the secret of the love between Fred Coleridge and his adopted child. The two years for which he had promised Fred to keep quiet were now expired, and circumstances fully justified him, he considered, in divulging it; indeed, it was necessary for Geraldine's comfort and health that he should impart it to Miss Knight, who was sincerely attached to the young girl, and had more sympathy for *her* weaknesses than for those of any other known mortal; so his answer to his sister's question was rather abrupt.

"There is, Cornelia."

"I thought so," the lady replied, with a slight degree of triumph in her voice. "I think, Tom, I might have been told."

"Fred Coleridge loved our Geraldine," said Mr. Knight, "and frankly confessed his views and wishes to me before he last left England; but I judged it best, Geraldine being then so extremely young, that the whole business should be kept quiet until his return, when, if they both found they loved each other as well as ever, their engagement might, and should be, made public."

"But, of course, then, Geraldine knew of it? What a pity."

"She did. Did you ever hear, my dear Cornelia, of a sailor keeping himself from telling a girl he loved her, when his whole heart was full of nothing else? Geraldine of course knew. Her love has grown with every month of his absence, every letter he has written to her, and justly so; Fred is a noble young fellow. Now the poor child is in terrible anxiety, we must do all we can to cheer her. You will keep your own counsel, Cornelia, and say and do nothing abroad to lead to this idea; too much sympathy would be worse for Geraldine than too little."

"You have not looked so high as I thought you would have done for your adopted daughter," said Miss Knight; "her dazzling beauty would have graced something more pretentious than the cabin of a mate. I have certainly favoured Harry Maunder's suit."

"Fred will be a captain before he marries her," said the merchant; "besides, what could I do? I don't consider that I have the hearts and destinies of people in my keeping. Fred's love for Geraldine was so pure, so sincere, so manly; and hers for him, as I believe, so complete, so trusting—blending the innocence of a child's heart with the love of a woman's—that I could not think it well to attempt to put a veto on what appeared so perfectly right and natural."

"I hope the poor fellow is not lost," said Miss Knight.

"God forbid that he should be," rejoined her brother, solemnly; then after a pause he added, "when the spring comes we must take Geraldine away to the sea-side, and try what a thorough change of air will do for her, poor

child. You had best not tell her that I have made you my confidante."

So the good brother and sister shielded and cared for the young girl under their roof with tenderest solicitude, binding her sad heart closer and closer to their own. Wearily the months rolled away. April came at last, and still no tidings of the *Geraldine.* At the end of that month Miss Knight took Geraldine to Hastings; but the heavy sound of the sea, as it murmured day and night in her wakeful ears, seemed to the poor child like the voice of despair, the echoes of groaning, dying mariners, and she entreated to be taken home again. In London she had work to do—her Band of Hope children, her Sunday-school class, her language and music lessons—idleness was intolerable to her. She dared not pause to think of the probable fate of Fred Coleridge. But when she was back again in London, and working daily and busily at these things, utter weariness overcame her, and she grew so worn and ill that Mr. Knight again insisted some further change was necessary.

One evening, when Geraldine was alone with him, she came to his side, as in the old childish days, and laid her tired head with its hopeless young face upon his shoulder, and whispered,—

"Uncle, may I tell you where I want to go?"

"Do, dearest child. I will let you go anywhere, if you will only manage to get bright and well again, or even better." He drew her close to him, and kept her within his sheltering, fatherly arm.

"I *should* like to be in Devonshire; *his* county, uncle."

"At the sea-side—at Plymouth?"

"No, uncle; no, thank you;" and poor Geraldine shuddered, and looked very pale. "I could not bear that beat of the waves upon the shore. But could we not find a nice place in one of those sweet country nooks —within *sight* of the sea, I should like, but not near enough to *hear* it, uncle; be sure we cannot *hear* it where we go."

"Very well, darling. Of course you shall go to Devonshire. It will be just the very place for you; and the fine air from the Dartmoor range will quite brace you up again."

So inquiries were made at once; and, to Mr. Knight's delight, Geraldine took a real interest in every effort to obtain lodgings, and every place to which they were recommended. But before they had left London sad tidings came from Putney respecting Ellen Maloney.

CHAPTER XXXII.

NO LIGHT!

"MR. TIM, your father sent me to ask you to come down to him at once."

It was the little errand-boy at the College —poor Mrs. Simmons's youngest child, whom Tim had recommended to Mr. Knight—who now spoke; and Tim, who was brushing his coat in an anteroom, quickly finished the operation, and lightly bounded down the pathway leading to the lodge. When he opened the door, and entered, he found only his father inside, seated by the hearth with his head bent, his face on his hands, and an air of terrible dejection around him.

"Tim, me boy, your mother's gone."

"Gone, father!" There was blank bewilderment in the young man's tone.

"Och, shure, I thought at first we would have been so happy," wailed Timothy Maloney, "and iverything to make her content and to keep her from harm. And how fine it all was for a month, and two months, and three

months; shure, Tim, we thought it convarsion intirely. And then she began to tamper, as ye know; she just took a glass at Christmas, and I scolded and coaxed her agin and agin; and for a month or two it was well. Thin—ye mind it, Tim?—she got dhrunk and struck at me, madlike after her abstinence; and the house was in misery, and the window-panes broke, and his honour, Mr. Knight (he's a raal good one), not angered, as another man would be, but sad at heart, and disappointed. Then another month steady; and now—she's gone, and she's taken me purse and all the money I had; but och, Tim, it's not the gould or the silver, it's the *wife* that I mourn. Shure, it began to be like ould times; and she lookin' so sweet, just as she did by Killarney; but, shure, the divil has bought her, poor soul, or else she would niver have gone back agin to the dhrink."

"What can be done, father?" said Tim.

"We must seek her—we must seek her—I will have no rest till I find her agin. Och, Tim, maybe I have not done me duty by her in the ould bad times of me life, and this is me judgment."

"Yes, father," said Tim, "we will seek her, and give her one more chance. I promised darlint Nelly, you know. You will go one night to London and I will go the next, and we'll look in all her old haunts, and try to find her."

So, night after night, by turns, as Tim had suggested, the father and son sought the wretched wanderer. She had taken five pounds of her husband's earnings, and with that sum, as they well knew, she could buy a welcome for many days in those temptations to vice—those

dens of iniquity—that are legalized to entrap and delude the sons and daughters of Great Britain. And on seven mornings following the tired searcher returned, pale, and worn, and sad, to the College or the lodge, having sought her in vain.

"Maybe she will have drowned herself in the river here," suggested Timothy Maloney, "and we seeking her alive in big London."

But no tidings came of any dead body being found in the neighbourhood, and this suggestion was not thought probable by Tim.

"More likely she went to see her old companions, father; the longing for the drink came upon her, and she went. I feel sure that is it. She would not have taken the money to drown."

Still father and son continued their quest of her. One night that it was Tim's turn to seek for her, he walked, just as dawn was breaking, through Seven Dials. How the drink-shops swarmed in that wretched locality; and, at that time, no beneficent Act of Parliament compelled the tide of sin and drunkenness to pause, even for a few hours of night, in its mad flow. Everywhere his eye turned were gin-palaces, spirit-stores, and public-houses; the gin-palaces, especially, glaring with deceitful light and warmth, instead of manifesting the cold, sorry fate that must by-and-by befall their frequenters.

"How *can* the people be good that live here?" thought Tim. The sight pained him more than formerly. He looked at it with more enlightened eyes, and he felt more deeply the contrast between it and his peaceful country home at Putney, than when he had had to com-

pare it with Candlemas Alley. "Merciful Father, how can Thy poor lost sheep ever find the way back to the fold through such a labyrinth of sin and vice as entangles them here?"

A few more paces brought him past another gin-palace. It stood at the corner of one of the seven streets, and had a broad step outside. On this, just in front of the closed door, with its ruby handles, sat, or rather crouched, two women, singing with wild, half-tipsy voices; and as they espied Tim they cried out,—

"Give us a penny, young sir, to buy a dhrap of gin to comfort us—do—do;" and there was a shrill, mocking laugh as he passed on. And again one voice was raised, "Trate me, yer honour, to a dhrop of gin."

Tim turned abruptly as that voice smote upon his ear with horrible distinctness. It was his mother's voice! After pausing for one moment to think how he should act, he hailed an empty cab as it passed, and then went over to the women.

"Mother," he said, and his voice was full of dignity as well as compassion, "come with me; my father and I are anxiously wanting you at home." He led her, too much startled to make resistance, along to the cab, placed her inside, and followed. Closing the door, he told the man to drive them home to Putney.

Ellen Maloney did not speak at first; she sat with her eyes closed, and a sulky, disappointed, disagreeable expression over her whole face. At last she said, "Why would ye find me, Tim, when I niver meant to be found, and niver wanted ye to seek me, at all at all?"

"Mother, I should seek ye, I should thry to save ye,

if I died in doing it," said Tim, earnestly. "Are ye not my mother? will I be afther forgetting God commands me to honour ye? and will I be afther forgetting me promise to me darlint Nelly? Mother, mother, it seems to me the divil is pulling ye with all his might the bad way; and ye will not thry to make him let go: ye keep running into his own territory, where he gets the dhrink sold to make people ready to serve him. O mother! ye've got ivery chance to be a good woman agin, and won't ye thry?"

"Tim," she said, with a shriek and a start—"Tim, I can't: why did ye bring me in here? let me out—let me out, they're coming—they're coming," and with a fearful oath, poor Ellen Maloney, seized now with delirium tremens, beat about the narrow limits of the carriage in an agony of despair. "Tim, save me," she cried again· "don't let them tear me from limb to limb, as they said they would;" and then she whispered in the ear of her son, in a voice of terror; "they are imps from hell, the little darlint sons of the divil, and they wail—oh, cushla!" and her voice rose again to a shriek—"they wail like the cry of the banshee."

It was a horrible sight to see how her face worked as she spoke, now distorted, now mocking, now despairing; with great drops of perspiration upon her poor forehead. Then, with a sudden cry, "Here they come agin; Tim, save me," she dashed her hands through the windows, in her efforts to be free.

Tim called to the driver to turn his horse and make for the nearest hospital: there, after seeing her properly cared for, he left her with an aching heart, promising to

come to see her on the following day. It was terrible news this to carry to the anxious father at home, but the sympathy between them was no small alleviation to their sorrow. For three weeks Ellen Maloney stayed at the hospital, enduring a terrible foretaste of the drunkard's doom, and then they took her home—a worn, white, wasted woman penitent enough, now that she was thoroughly sober.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

SUMMER ON THE MOORS.

MISS KNIGHT and Geraldine were located at last, amongst the most charming of scenery, near the Devonshire village of Cornwood. A little moorland river, a very rivulet compared with broad old Father Thames, but clear as crystal, meandered along the pleasant valley at which they looked from the window of their sitting-room; but just below, where a rustic bridge spanned its narrow current, it bounded and foamed and splashed over its rocky bed in buoyant, tumultuous glee; like some sweet merry child, restrained for hours by solemn instructions in the school-room, laughs and dances and sings when she once more joins her young companions in the freedom and joyousness of the playground. The garden of Ivy Cottage was full of flowers, a very paradise to Geraldine; the fair clematis and luscious honeysuckles and laughing roses twined over the rustic porch, and on each side the gate leading into the road stood giant rhododendrons in full pale purple bloom, a perfect mass of beauty. It was

those veritable rhododendrons that had decided the place of their abode. Geraldine had been fascinated with them, and when she looked up and saw the neat card with "Apartments to let" in the window, had coaxed Miss Knight to try the owner of those flowers: and when they found the gentle little widow lady, Mrs. Mary Parsons, matched her flowers in sweetness and fitness of appearance, the lodgings, to Geraldine's great satisfaction, were taken at once. And now the young girl, after her tarriance of four short weeks, was rapidly gaining health, and strength, and spirits, and loved to ramble at her own sweet will over the moors and in the woods, dreaming still, but happier dreams, picturing life, but in brighter tints. Hope was restored to her with her returning strength, and she walked miles in that bracing Dartmoor air, finding out beautiful nooks to show Aunt Knight: seldom met in her wanderings save by the old shepherd, who gave her a kindly and respectful greeting, and whose rough dogs she loved to play with; or by the ruddy, bright-eyed, flaxen-haired village children, on their way to and from the school-house, who laughed in her smiling face, and sometimes dropped a courtesy, or pulled a lock of hair, in acknowledgment of her pleasant words.

Only about half a mile from Ivy Cottage was one of the loveliest of woodland glens, through which the river wandered: tall trees clustered in large groups, stretching wide their leafy arms, to shelter and adorn their native grove; underneath the trees was a beautiful network of brambles and creepers and ivy and holly bushes, with the graceful ferns in exquisite luxuriance between; the

squirrels ran, in busy playfulness, or gladsome industry, up the great boughs of oak and elm, springing from branch to branch, hiding their small red backs and bushy tails under the bright green leaves, or coquettishly twining around the trunk, and peeping down at Geraldine with their knowing black eyes; the glancing fish sparkled in the sunshine, as they now and then rose from the stream; the emerald dragon-flies flashed past her; the birds, full of ecstasy at the genial weather and their lovely home, kept up an unbroken but varied harmony of sound; the queenly fox-gloves, in their splendid robes of royal crimson-purple hue, kept court amongst green ferns, apart from other flowers; while the democratic wild-roses, with their sweet crimson and white little faces, crept lovingly over bush and brier, and made all more fair by their presence. Farther on, the river took a wild leap over a precipice, making a pretty cascade of bright silver foam and bubbling water; and then, as if tired, quietly resumed its course again toward the distant sea. Turning back and following the stream to its source, with the golden sunshine pouring down on her curling chestnut hair, and her bright face aglow with the flush of healthy exercise, Geraldine, after a walk of about a mile through the woodland, reached an old gate, and the moss-covered trunk of a fallen tree, on which she often sat to rest, taking out from her pocket a favourite little book of poetry or romance, and the small neat packet of sandwiches which her kind little landlady had cut for her, and especially enjoined her not to forget.

"Poetry, and lovely walks, and Dartmoor air are all very good, my dear Miss Geraldine, but you can't get on

in life without eating, say what they like; even the Israelites in the desert—sustained as they were, and we don't expect such manifestations now-a-days—felt the need of manna and quails. Our bodies were not given us to starve them, and if you *won't* have a drop of my sweet cider before you go,—I do assure you, you need not be afraid of the spirit in it, it is very mild; but if you won't, well, then, my dear young lady, at least take this glass of milk; and carry your sandwiches with you, and don't forget to eat 'em."

"Thank you, Mrs. Parsons," Geraldine had said this morning, as on many mornings previously; and then added, "but how fat I shall get, all this oxygen and carbon too," and her sweet laugh, merrier now than for many a day, sounded pleasantly to the old lady's ears.

"Never mind those queer names, my dear Miss Geraldine; it is your *duty* to get fat, and mine to see you do it."

"And then uncle Knight won't know me, Mrs. Parsons; good-bye."

And with her white straw hat, trimmed with blue ribbon and white feather, on her fair young head, and her simple morning robe of light print, Geraldine Maloney started on her walk; and now we must follow her to the mossy trunk, and the perusal of her little book: she starts up again when the last sandwich is eaten and a well-worn page re-read, and passes out through the dilapidated old gate on to the wild region of Dartmoor. What a contrast the whole scene presents to the wood she has left, with its thronging life, its luxurious vegetation, its leafy trees, and the long lines of sunlight and shadow. Here the

short mossy turf springs up pleasantly under her light tread; the sun has a broad sweep of land over which to shine without interruption, save from the scattered granite tors (the two nearest together quite as much as a quarter of a mile apart), and the long stone wall covered with mosses and lichens that skirts the moor, and separates it from the cultivated fields and abodes of men. But what a delicious sense of freedom there is to Geraldine outside of that old gate; how pure and sweet and invigorating is the air that is wafted to her by the gentle summer breeze, all fragrant with heath, and golden furze-blossom, and wild thyme. And when she has walked on beside the little river for another mile, as it winds, a mere thread of shining beauty, round the hills, to its rise, at the foot of a tor, a gurgling upspringing of clear water from the heathy down; she seats herself a little wearily beside it, watching it with intensest interest for many minutes, and not contented yet, climbs the steep ascent, to the very summit of the rocky peak, looks around at the fair prospect of woodland and moorland, little villages with their church-spires pointing to the skies; then, sheltered in a fissure of the granite from wind and sun, she gazes southward lingeringly and lovingly to the blue line of sea. The sky is clear and cloudless; she can mark far, far away the white outline of a sail; there is a strange fascination for her in this glorious view; her eyes rest only for a moment at the land between herself and that blue line, and then turn to it again, while her thoughts are farther away than her eyes; and her heart asks itself sad, thoughtful questions—"Has Fred forgotten me? Was it right of me to cherish the

hopes of his youth which he expressed, as if they would also be the wishes of his manhood? And if he comes, and has sunk into the mere seaman, rough, jolly, light-hearted, but coarse, and unrefined in feeling and action, could I fulfil my promise to him? Three years nearly since we parted; what a long time it is; how is it possible that for all these months there have been no news of him, nor of the ship, if they are really safe? If the *Geraldine* would but sail into Plymouth harbour while Aunt Knight and I are at Cornwood!"

In these strange fancies and wishes and hopes, hour after hour fled away, and the sun had passed its meridian; already the shadows of the great tors grew somewhat longer on the heathy moorland, and still Geraldine sat and mused. Three years had not been long enough to shut out the image of the young sailor from her heart. I think, young as she was, she possessed that strongly clinging kind of affection, that, when once it has crept around another human heart, can never lose its hold; time has no power to weaken it, for it has its root in eternity; death cannot cause it to forget, for it partakes of an everlasting life.

She thought for a few minutes, while a smile of pretty contempt curled her beautiful lip, of the flattering attentions she had received of late from young Harry Maunder. She thought of Miss Knight's suggestion, that "he was as good a young man as you could find." What a strange idea that was; if he *had* been, how would nations be wisely governed, and grand deeds be performed, and blessed acts of love and charity be carried out? It was perfectly impossible, however kindly

Geraldine wished to think of the young man, that she should echo the words of Aunt Knight; she thought of the weak brow, the drooping eyes, the curled and scented hair, the long, fair moustache, the lisping tongue, the silly words, the meaningless nothings of the professed lady-killer, who had graciously consented to signify his admiration of her above all his other fair friends,—and she laughed a low, sweet laugh of perfect merriment, that would not have flattered the said gentleman, could he have had sense enough to understand its meaning. There was another insuperable objection to Mr. Maunder, besides his *nothingness*, in the mind of Geraldine: she knew he drank wine, and rightly judged that as he had but little sense *without* imbibing intoxicants, he would have still less when he had taken them; she was determined, whatever else she did, or did not do, that she would *never* marry a man of whom she thought it possible to feel ashamed; she imagined the "pretty" young man—for Geraldine always applied that adjective to his good looks—faltering and staggering into her drawing-room from his club; she felt what contempt would arise in her heart for a man of education and means who could thus debase himself; she knew she could never "honour and obey" a man who could get drunk; she thought, too, of the careless puffing of the smoke from his lips, as, in an affected attitude, he held the cigar between his jewelled fingers;—and her heart turned from him as quickly and as naturally as light from darkness.

"Oh! Aunt Knight, as good a man as you can find; why, think of Fred," and another image stood before

her—the young mate of the *Geraldine* as she had last seen him with his honest, manly face, bronzed with exposure to wind and sun, lit up with his beautiful kindly eyes, and set off by a quantity of richly-coloured brown and curling hair; she remembered, too, the bright tears and the soft glance that had shone and melted in those eyes the evening he had bidden her "good-bye;" she remembered how he had kissed her gravely, tenderly, then passionately, and said again and again, with almost a sob between his words, "Never forget me, darling Geraldine; and never suppose, whatever happens, that I shall forget you: God bless you." And when her own tears and choking sobs had almost prevented her utterance, he had stooped gently over her, and in low, earnest tones had pleaded, "Let me hear you say, God bless you, Fred;" and she had said it, and clung to him with a beating, aching heart, and felt within her the opening of the flood-gates of that true womanly nature of hers which henceforth, happen what would, would be faithful to her sailor-lover.

While Geraldine in the sheltered nook of the old tor was looking at the sea, and thinking all these thoughts, and many more we cannot find space to write, a train had arrived at Cornwood from Plymouth, and had set down about its usual number of passengers at that quiet little village: two or three amateur fishermen, with their lines and baskets, and contented faces, glad of their pleasant rambles and musings amongst lovely scenes, even if they had small sport; one or two pairs of lovers, bent on reading the poetry of their own hearts reflected in silvery streams, and sunlit leaves, and bending

flowerets ; and a young sailor with a large, square-shaped flat parcel in his hand. He exchanged a few words with the station-master, who gave him some directions respecting his road, and then set off at a brisk pace, taking the path to the village ; it led through a green Devonshire lane, beautiful with overhanging foliage, the hedges gay with wreathing honeysuckles, and golden buttercups and variegated snapdragons, and cheerful with the songs of birds : the stranger was a broad-set young man, handsome in feature and pleasant in countenance ; his dress was that of a merchantman's officer rather than an ordinary seaman, though a trifle shabby, and the broad-brimmed, shining hat was of true sailor type. He went along, singing as he went, in a merry strain, and a good baritone voice, one of Russell's sea-songs, and every now and then pausing a moment, with a bright look on his face, as if to reflect on some prospective happiness ; and as he walked, the dancing leaves above him, moved hither and thither by the sportive summer breeze, made a fair tracery of flickering shadows over the golden sunlight on his firm, broad, young shoulders. He came at last to the houses, and then he stopped his song, and his dark eyes looked anxiously forward. He poised the package in his hand more carefully, and continued his walk. "Ivy Cottage ! this must be it surely ; just the place they would choose." Yes ; the name stared at him in black letters from the top bar of the white gate ; he passed between the rhododendron towers, up the sanded pathway, cut through the soft green grass ; there was a lady in the little parlour, seated with her back to the window, reading : one eager glance seemed to satisfy the sailor,

for he turned his head abruptly, and knocked at the green door. Little Mrs. Parsons quickly opened it.

"Good afternoon, ma'am," said the pleasant voice; "does a Miss Knight lodge here, and a Miss—" he stopped abruptly.

"Yes, they do, sir. Miss Maloney is out on the moors for her walk, but Miss Knight is in; will you walk in?"

This was just such a little bit of romance for the chatty little old lady as she delighted in.

"Thank you," replied the sailor.

He followed her into the parlour as she opened the door; and almost before the landlady had time to say, "A young sailor-gentleman, Miss Knight," he stood before that lady.

Cornelia Knight rose with her usually grave, almost severe manner; but a smile crept over her features, making them strangely pleasant to look upon, as she held out her hand and said, warmly, "Fred Coleridge! well, it *is* pleasant to see you again."

"It can't be half as pleasant as it is to be seen by one whom I honour as I do you, Miss Knight," the young sailor said, respectfully. "I came into Plymouth Sound last evening, and telegraphed at once to Mr. Knight and Mr. Christie. Mr. Knight answered me by telling me to come here, where I should find you, and he would meet me here to-night."

"There must be a long story to tell," said Miss Knight. "We have all been sadly anxious about the fate of the *Geraldine* and her captain and crew; indeed, so anxious, that it was thought well for us to have a change, and Geraldine and I came here a month ago."

"Is Miss—is Geraldine here?" stammered Fred, the tell-tale colour deepening on his bronzed cheeks, and mounting to his temples.

"No, Fred; she has rambled off to the moors. You would hardly have known her a month ago, she looked so ill; now she is more her old self again. It is very fine air here.—You may try to find her, if you will," added Cornelia Knight, kindly. "There is but one very high tor near us, and it is on that hill you had best look for her; it is her favourite place. But have something before you go."

"Oh no, thank you, Miss Knight," and Fred was off without another word. The high hill or tor, of which the lady had spoken, had been plainly visible to him in his walk from the station; another twenty minutes and he was on the breezy down, and within a stone's throw of his destination. Here he paused, looking up at the granite peaks, and wondering if she could see him. How often he had pictured their meeting in the old dining-room at Woburn Square, or on the deck of the *Geraldine;* how little he had ever hoped to find her in his own lovely county, amongst the wild moors and the wooded valleys he loved so well. Presently he caught sight of a woman's dress outside the little sheltered nook in which we left Geraldine. He drew nearer, climbed the abrupt ascent, and was at her side. It was a fair picture that he gazed upon so lovingly and tenderly. Geraldine, tired with her long walk, and perhaps nearly as much wearied with her sad musings, had fallen asleep; her crimson cheek, softly shadowed by her chestnut curls, lay pillowed on a little bed of emerald moss; her small

hat lay on her lap, its blue ribbon fluttering over her light robe; her little white hands were clasped; her whole attitude bespoke dejection. The grouping was perfect; the young sweet face exquisite in its beauty. Fred Coleridge stood and gazed. "How womanly she has grown, how feminine, how sweet, how delicately pure, how exactly as my fondest fancies pictured her; but what am I, that I should dare to think of possessing this treasure?"

There was a slight stir, and Geraldine opened her blue eyes. She gazed up in bewilderment at the unexpected apparition before her, and the bright rosy blush of delight and utter surprise mantled cheeks and brow; and then fled as suddenly, leaving her very white and trembling. The young sailor lifted her from her resting-place and folded her to his heart. "Geraldine, Geraldine, my soul has thirsted for this for nearly three years. God be praised that I have you again at last!" His dark eyes were glowing and tearful. Then he sat down where she had sat alone, and drew her beside him, encircling her with his arm, and holding her little hand tightly in his own, kissing it and her soft warm lips many times before he spoke again.

"Are you not glad to see me, Geraldine?"

At last she found words to speak. Often before, in these few minutes, her lips had moved, and yet articulation failed her; now she hid her face on his breast, and whispered,—"O Fred, I have been *so* weary; you have been *so* long in coming; but this is worth all." And then, as if to prove her words by contrary action, the poor child burst into tears. He kissed them away, and

playfully reproached her for crying, while his own eyes were dim. "I have been dreaming of you, Fred," she whispered again; "looking at the sea, and dreaming about you long ago sitting on the rock when the *Linda* was wrecked, and you first became my hero." Her face was hid again now, and Fred pressed her hand mischievously. "And when I woke and saw you, Fred, I thought it must still be my dream."

"Are you sorry it was not, Geraldine?"

"Of course I am," she said, recovering her mirthfulness, and smiling archly. They gazed into each other's eyes; read, as if intuitively, the truth and faith that had already, in each of them, stood the test of three long years; and then Fred told her some of the sad experiences of the last weary twelve months, and how, through all, her image had guided and cheered him in every difficulty and danger. At last, as they talked, the dark shadows gathered faster and faster around them; the cool night breeze blew on them across the moor, and Fred feared for Geraldine to encounter it in her light summer dress. So they rose reluctantly, and hand in hand descended the shadowy tor, and crossed the elastic heath, and down through the narrow lane to Cornwood and Ivy Cottage.

"You have not been strong lately, Geraldine," said Fred, as he drew the thin little hand within his arm, and held it there. "Have you been grieving for me?"

"Yes, Fred," she whispered.

"Poor darling. It must have seemed horribly cruel of me not to find some means of letting you hear from

me for more than a year; but you understand it all now. I wonder if Mr. Knight has come?"

"Oh, I quite forgot *this* was the day, and I was *so* looking forward to it when I went out."

Fred laughed, and looked very pleased. "Can you forget everybody for me, Geraldine?"

"You vain young man, did I forget any one?" she asked; but her face was very crimson.

They passed through the white gate together, between the rhododendron walls, in at the green door, and into the little parlour. The shutter was shut, and there was a rattling of tea-cups and saucers, and a noise of voices within. Mr. Knight and Mr. Christie both rose from the table as they entered. Geraldine bounded from Fred's side, and hid her beaming face on Mr. Knight's shoulder. He kissed her fondly, and clasped her tenderly in his arms, with a world of sympathy in her great joy, just as he had shown to her through all the weary months of her sorrow; she felt it as she had never done before. Mr. Christie was shaking Fred's hand as if he intended to shake it off.

"Well, well, boy, you *are* a runaway. Come, come, what account can you possibly give of yourself and your ship. Sit down, sit down! Miss Knight says you've not tasted a morsel of food since you came; living on love, I suppose—eh, young man?" and he nudged Fred's elbow. Fred, laughing, returned the hearty salutation, and then turned to Mr. Knight, while Geraldine came over to Mr. Christie to receive his greeting, and to ask for Minnie. "So, so, young lady, you've got a nice piece of business on hand, courting amongst

Devonshire lanes—eh? That's how my poor boy Tom had such a poor chance with your ladyship; your heart was 'over the sea, over the sea.' 'Some one is coming ere long.' Now, then, for tea, and a long yarn after it."

Geraldine was very rosy again when he released her. It was a merry, happy party that sat down together under the roof of Ivy Cottage that lovely July evening, and thankful hearts that afterwards listened eagerly to Fred's history of his marvellous adventures when on board the *Geraldine*

CHAPTER XXXIV

THE SAILOR'S PICTURE.

"WE had sailed from Canton," began Fred, "on the 13th of May, as proposed; but soon after we put to sea, our fresh water ran very short through a leak in the cistern, and Captain Seymour at once determined to put into an island that we saw not far off, to supply this deficiency, before any inconvenience had arisen from it. This island, though near the Philippine Islands, and marked on our chart, has had no name given to it, that we can learn, by Englishmen; and if we had to give it a name now, after our experience there, it would not be a very flattering one to the inhabitants. It was, however, a lovely spot, so far as natural beauties go. The palms, and acacias, and bread-fruit trees, were in luxuriant foliage; and bright birds flew about. Plenty of little humming-birds, Geraldine, with their plumage of such exquisite colours, that they looked just like flowers as they perched amongst the green leaves; and like jewels, emeralds, and rubies, when they glanced and darted

through the sunbeams. All the crew asked leave to go on shore for the water, and departed in the boat with large buckets to fill and bring back. Watson was in command as second mate. Captain Seymour, old Sam, and I, were the only men left on board. We had seen a group of dark islanders, men much like Malays in appearance, with long black hair, brown skins, and thin faces, meet our crew, and apparently conduct them in a friendly manner to the springs of water inland. Some hours passed away. Mrs. Seymour and the children had taken their siestas, and we had dined. And already the sun was sinking; and, without the preparatory hour of twilight that we have in England, darkness came down upon us, almost suddenly. The captain grew anxious about his men; but old Sam re-assured him, 'They're up to a lark with them darkies, capen,' he said; 'never thee fear, they'll be back again in the morning; we're in a calm sea, and the good Lord above is on the watch-tower to mind us.' But Captain Seymour was a good deal put out, and angry with Watson; who, he said, ought to have come back to the ship before sundown. Old Sam and I stayed on deck; the captain bade us good-night, and went below to his wife and children; and soon we fell into yarning about Cornwall and Devon, and the old war times that Sam was so fond of talking about. There was no moon that night; but the stars were very bright above us in that southern sky;—not our stars, Geraldine, as you know; but the beautiful Corona, and many more that I must not stay to talk about now. We were startled from our quiet talk by a little noise through the calm water. 'It's only the

fish, my hearty,' said old Sam. But I still listened; it seemed like a quick but measured stroke through the water, not of rowing, but paddling; and the sound came nearer. 'Can our men be coming back, Sam, at this time of night?' 'Not a bit of it, Fred; 'tis the fish, thee mayst depend on it. Do 'ee look, my son, there's the flash they make in the water, purty little creeturs they be.' 'Uncle Sam, 'tisn't the fish,' I said. I knew the old man's ears were not so sharp as they had been. 'I'm afraid there's mischief brewing; let me warn Captain Seymour.' 'As thee will, as thee will, Fred; but I only hear the fish. Why, I mind, down at St. Ives, I've heerd a rushing in the say of a calm night, just like as if the wind whistled underneath through the waters, and it warn't nothing more than the pelchards coming into bay.' Old Sam had hardly finished speaking, when a boat grated for a moment along our keel; and before I could run to warn Captain Seymour, dark figures poured into the ship, scrambling up the sides of the vessel like monkeys, and striding about the deck, brandishing clubs and guns. I rushed down to the captain's cabin, woke him hastily, and told him all. His greatest trouble was, naturally, for his wife and children, and the English servant they had with them. He fastened them into the cabin, locked it, and put the key in his pocket; then, with a white face, he turned the key again in the lock, and begging them to keep there, and to be very quiet, till he sent for them, he came up on deck with me. 'I might have been insuring a dreadful death for them by locking them in,' he said, in a whisper. 'Fanny is a brave woman; I can trust to her

to act wisely, whatever happens.' On deck a sad scene presented itself as we turned our lanterns. Old Sam lay bruised and bleeding, a thick cord round his legs and hands. My first impulse was to cut it and set him free; but whilst I did so, I received a blow from behind on the head, and sank back insensible on the deck. When I woke, I found myself lying in a low hut, bound hands and feet. Through the opening I could see, at a little distance, a palm-tree waving its feathery leaves; but I was quite alone in the hut, and for many hours (it seemed many days, but I was too ill to reckon time properly) I only saw a dark woman, of whose language I knew nothing, and who could not, of course, understand me. She only knew one word of English, I think, for she kept saying every day, 'Better, better!' and I shook my head mournfully, by way of reply. I tried hard to make her understand that I wanted to see a white man; and after a little she seemed to comprehend me, and brought Captain Seymour to my side. I can't half tell you how delighted I was to see him safe and well, and to hear his story, sad as it was. He was living in another tent with poor old Sam, who was far too ill, as he feared, to recover. Mrs. Seymour, with the nurse and children, were kept alone, and waited on by the wives of the chief. Captain Seymour was dreadfully anxious as to their fate. He had met with Watson, who had explained their absence in this way. Directly they got to the springs of water amongst the hills, instead of being allowed to fill their casks and return, they were chained together, and signs were made that they were to be slaves to the islanders. Then they were marched off to a

collection of huts a mile or two farther, where they found two other Englishmen, sailors; who had lived, they told them, for years on the island, and were the last of a crew of seven that had been captured, just as our tars had been. One of these, however, had lived contentedly on the island; become the son of the chief, by marrying the prettiest of his daughters, and was now the father of one or two dark-skinned children that sported about him. The other longed restlessly to be free. 'I don't think you need fear death,' said the chief's son-in-law, 'but you will be kept here altogether, and they will break up your ship, or paint it over, and claim it as their own. They are sure to take out all the stores. They broke up ours after awhile.' Our men were now scattered over the island; but every one of them, even the captain, had his feet chained together, so as to make it impossible for them to run far. The night on which I had been wounded, the islanders had fought desperately with the captain, who killed one of them with his revolver before he allowed himself to be taken. They then lowered us all into the boat; and the captain had himself summoned his wife and family on deck, lest they should be ill-treated if they were only discovered after he had left the ship. This was our sorry plight, good sirs, and I have still a long story to tell."

"But you telegraphed that the *Geraldine* was safe, as I understood?" said Mr. Christie.

"So she is, sir," said Fred, smiling; "safe in Plymouth Sound, though somewhat battered and out of gear. And as for her figure-head, Geraldine, the chief was so smitten with your reflected charms that he had it care

fully cut off and set up in his hut. I very much fear he will make an idol of it."

"Wouldn't that be as allowable as worshipping the original?" said Mr. Christie, slyly glancing at the young lovers as they sat side by side, Fred's arm over the back of Geraldine's chair, and his eyes every now and then bent on her glowing, attentive, upturned face.

"During our long imprisonment," resumed Fred, his eyes full of fun in answer to the merchant's remark, "we learned the geography of that little island pretty well. We were not worked very hard, for there was not much to be done where nature provided food almost without any trouble; and where one tailor might have served to clothe all the inhabitants. We had the satisfaction to find that they did not break up our ship—the beautiful little vessel rode at anchor in the pretty bay;—and the more we looked at her the more we longed to be on board again. The English sailor who had been so long on the island was always begging us to make our escape. 'I'll undertake,' he said one day, 'to make all these men drunk, and then we'll run off. I make a capital sort of beer or wine from the bread-fruit—they can't resist it—and then we'll get away.' But Captain Seymour and I couldn't see that would be right, nor could old Sam; for old Sam didn't die on the island, but recovered wonderfully, though he was very weak still. 'Never do evil, my dears, that good may come,' the old man said, in his broad Cornish accent; but the sailors grumbled at this."

"And very good reason they had, too," said Mr. Christie, looking rather furious. "Teetotal nonsense.

Why, the islanders would soon have got their senses to rights again; and which is the greatest sin to spare them from, piracy and murder, or drunkenness? I always thought there was a lot of fanaticism, blind fanaticism, in this teetotalism of yours."

"But, Mr. Christie," said Geraldine earnestly, her cheek crimsoning; "Captain Seymour had nothing to do with the islanders committing piracy, so he could not be answerable for their sin; but if he had had them made *drunk*, the sin would have rested not with them, but with *him*."

"Woman's reasoning, my dear child—always illogical," laughed Mr. Christie; but he did not attempt to answer her; and Mr. Knight said,—

"I think our little woman is right, Christie."

"While I was on the island, just to beguile my time, Geraldine, I made a bit of a picture for you," said Fred, rising now from his chair and going towards the package which we have seen him carrying so carefully from the station, while the saucy sunbeams played bo-peep on his back, and which, when he went to seek Geraldine, he had left standing in a horizontal position against the wall. He uncovered sheet after sheet of paper, and at last brought out an excellent likeness of the fair ship *Geraldine*, her sails set, her colours flying, and underneath the rippling blue waters of a summer sea, while above her were light, fleecy clouds, and a gorgeous sunrise, glowing with rich tropical tints of deep gold and warmest crimson.

"Why, Fred, I never dreamed that you were an artist!" exclaimed Geraldine in a delighted tone, as she

rose and stood before the picture, and looked first at the handsome young face of her sailor-lover, and then at the very creditable production of his brush.

"Nor am I, darling," said Fred, smiling at her enthusiasm; "and I don't believe anything but captivity would have brought out so much as that from my clumsy fingers. But there are plenty of thoughts of home and you surrounding every stroke and colour that I made, and I wondered over and over whether it would ever get to you, Geraldine."

"I am so happy that it has," she said eagerly, taking Fred's hand affectionately between her own.

"But how did you get these colours, Fred; and where were your brushes?" asked Mr. Knight.

"You may well ask, sir. The natives were accustomed to paint themselves gaily for their festivals, and it was easy to coax the women to lend me their gamboge and other colours; brushes I got from a little box of Mrs. Seymour's, that was brought on shore, and was given to her because they did not care for its contents. We stayed on the island six months, and all this time Captain Seymour was not allowed to be with his wife and children more than an hour or so every day. We wearied dreadfully of our manner of life; and it was tantalizing to see the *Geraldine* all this time lying idle in the bay, and we unable to reach her. One night, as Captain Seymour, old Sam, and myself were sleeping on mats in our hut—for we had lately shared one hut—we were suddenly awakened by the noise of voices speaking in a low tone, and in English; and looking up, we saw several of our men, and Joe Neville, the sailor who had been on the

island before we came. They were free; and at once struck off the chains from our feet, and signing to us to be perfectly quiet, and to come quickly (I only stayed to pick up my picture, Geraldine), led us hurriedly towards the shore. There we found Mrs. Seymour, and the nurse girl, and the three children, with Watson and the rest of our crew, already in one of our ship's boats. We joined them and rowed rapidly, heavy as was the boat, towards the ship. Every strong pull brought us nearer to home and freedom; and it would be impossible to describe how delighted we were to find ourselves once more on deck." Fred paused, and then continued: "But our troubles were not all over yet. We were almost without water; for we dared not return to the island for a supply, and it would have made the boat far too heavy to have brought any great quantity with us."

"But I don't quite understand how your deliverance was accomplished, Fred!" said Mr. Knight. "Were the savages made drunk by this Joe Neville?"

"I ought to have explained, sir. There was a grand festival to be held in honour of a certain god—it only came once in two years; they always drink a great deal of palm-wine at it, and engage in excesses of all descriptions. Joe's bread-fruit beer was also in requisition, I have no doubt, for he told us he had first made a supply of it for them on a similar festival. While they were carousing the first day (the feast lasted three days), he managed to talk to the sailors, and got them to arrange a plan for our deliverance; and they determined not to take us into their confidence, lest we might raise any objection."

"I don't wonder at it," said Mr. Christie, pretending to be angry; "a set of teetotal fanatics."

"We now numbered," resumed Fred, "seventeen men, two women, and three little children, and had only water to last us a couple of days, with a blazing sun above us. Our food, too, was very insufficient. The sailors had brought with them a small bag of bread-fruit and a good many cocoa-nuts; and we trusted to set sail and reach Manilla before our store was quite exhausted. But there was almost no wind, and our dread grew very strong lest, before we were able to get off from that unfriendly bay, the natives should make another night attack upon us. But in the evening the wind freshened a little, and the sails began to flutter, and then swell, and then our beautiful little ship glided away as prettily and gently as that day when she was launched—a good many years ago now, but you well remember it, Geraldine? Well, off we went. That day and the next our provisions satisfied us very well, and we shot an inland bird or two—a sort of duck that hovered over the water. We hoped to be in sight of Manilla in the morning, but at night the wind died away, and there we were—*becalmed*. I never knew before, Mr. Christie," said Fred, seriously, "what an awful word that might become to a man's memory. You told me long ago, sir, about my great namesake the poet Coleridge and the 'Ancient Mariner;' he might have been a sailor, to have written that. We, too, lay 'like a painted ship upon a painted ocean;' the sun blazed down upon us intensely, as I never felt the sun before or since, and not a breath of air stirred. Our hands and faces grew blistered with the heat, and our throats dry

and parched. But our water was almost all gone, and we dared not drink all the milk from the cocoa-nuts, knowing we might come to a still worse extremity. Captain Seymour grew ill of fever; and his poor wife had enough to do to nurse him and her poor little children, who were always complaining of the heat and thirst, and to solace her maid, who was longing to be in England again, and more of a care than a comfort to her mistress. It was now that the fiercest temptation assailed my teetotalism that I have ever known, Geraldine; and it needed all my loving recollection of your words, and the words of little Nelly, when I bade her a last good-bye, and the teaching of the Band of Hope, to keep me from yielding. Joe Neville brought out on deck a little flask of his bread-fruit wine, and offered to pour out a glassful all round, and bade us forget our thirst. The men drank it eagerly, poor fellows, with hardly a pause between the emptying and refilling of the glass. It came to old Sam's turn. 'Not for me, my dear,' he said kindly to Joe; 'I've had too much a'ready to do with the devil incarnate for me to touch the drink again.' 'The devil incarnate,' cried Joe, 'the old man's wandering; 'twill do you good, father.' 'The old man's not wandering now, but he've wandered many a time, through a glass offered in kindness,' said old Sam. 'I'm getting near my heavenly home now, I b'lieve, and I think the Lord will keep me sober to the end.' '*You* won't be such a fool as to refuse me, Mate Coleridge,' cried Joe Neville, 'though you are a teetotaller; but this is for medicine; come, man, swallow it down, and you will feel the better for it.' My tongue was dreadfully dry, Geraldine, and my lips felt

glued together; any cool beverage that would moisten them seemed like a Godsend; I took the glass in my hand, and raised it to my mouth—"

"O Fred! you *didn't* drink it," cried Geraldine, her hands clasped, her eyes reading his face.

"And then—I thought I could see little Nelly Maloney looking at me, and hear her say, 'Quit ye like men; be strong.' 'No thank you, Joe,' I said, putting down the glass and turning away, 'I'll not break my pledge to-day;' O Geraldine, I'm glad I didn't."

"But it was madness, perfect teetotal madness," said Mr. Christie; "you were flying, Fred Coleridge, in the face of Providence, and I had thought better things of you."

"O sir," replied Fred, modestly, "you would have thought it the best of wisdom if you had seen what I saw. Our poor fellows, after they had had the wine, got dreadfully excited; at first they laughed, and sang, and began to dance about the deck, then they quarrelled, and before night there was a stabbing case on board that almost ended in murder; we had to tear the men apart, and the wounded man lay groaning in his berth, and crying piteously for water. I ordered the rest of the wine into the sea, in the name of the captain. Joe Neville was frightfully angry, but I determined to have my own way, and old Sam, and Watson, and Isaac, our negro, seconded me: I felt happier after that was done, for I knew I should only have men, not savage demons, to deal with. Old Sam was struck down soon after this; he had never been strong since the night that he was so roughly handled by the islanders, and the want of food and water

soon wasted his remaining strength ; he did not seem to suffer much actual pain, and used to talk beautifully to me about his 'desired haven.' 'My old body will rest peacefully enough, my dear, under the say. Don't 'ee grieve for me, my soul is best part of old Sam, and that'll be safe up in heaven, safe in port after 'most being shipwracked, and many gales and sou'-westers and trade-winds blawing it hither and thither ; aw, don't 'ee grieve, my dear ; when I get into the "desired haven ;"—I dare-say thee's mind, when thee wast a youngster, how thee fayther rejoiced to see Plymouth Sound when he was out trawling, and thee got to be glad too. I'm so glad as that there, and happy to be nearing the New Jerusalem ; aw, my dear, and Jesus'll meet his poor old salt, sure 'nough, and give him a welcome ; and when I see His brightness, I'll forget everything for very joy,—"no more hunger, no more thirst, no more say." I used not to like them there words, Fred, for seems to me the say is the best part of this here lower world, and I always felt cooped up like on land, but He knaws best ; and there'll be no becalming there, "The sun shall not light on them, nor any heat,"—aw, my dear, heaven's a bootiful place ; never thee fear, pull right away for heaven, steer clear of all the rocks and quicksands, never mind where the body lies, only thee mind about the soul. I'd as soon as not be under the say, with the big waves rolling up from around me ; 'twould seem natural-like, I fancy ; and thee knaws, Fred, it'll be all right wherever it is,—when Judgment-day comes round, say will give up its dead.' He was talking just in this way one day, when sickness came on ; I think he must have had a sunstroke, for he grew faint

and shivered. I carried him down from the deck and laid him in his berth, and he never rallied. I heard him whisper just before he died, and as I stooped to listen, he said, 'Fred, my dear, the dear Lord is here,' and so died." Fred's eyes were full of tears as he turned again to Geraldine, and she cried quietly, while Mr. and Miss Knight and Mr. Christie were much moved; they had all loved the good old man. "We buried him under the sea next morning," said Fred: "the blue and sunny waters seemed to open gently and receive him lovingly into their soft embrace, and a low gurgling sound was all the noise we heard, as the corpse of dear old Sam was lowered into them. I read over him the Church service, and then we sang several hymns, and I tried to speak a little to our men, as he would have wished me to,"—here Fred's voice broke down in sobs, and it was several minutes before he recovered himself. "I can never tell any one, not even you, dear Geraldine, all that good old Christian was to me; how often he made me strong against sin, by reminding me of my duty to God and man; how often he had helped me by his own experience. I almost felt as if I had lost a father. That night, a head-wind sprang up, and bore us quickly away from his watery grave. A few days after this, Captain Seymour was well enough to come amongst us, and direct our movements, and then the harbour of Manilla was reached. We soon made our case known, and were supplied with necessary provisions and water, and our hardships were over: we then set sail for the Cape, where every kindness was shown to us; and here we are at last, once more in dear old England."

"The captain and his family are all gone on to London in the *Geraldine?*" said Mr. Knight.

"They are, sir; I forgot to tell you that Mrs. Seymour's youngest child died; Charlie and Fanny weathered through all, though they looked like little ghosts before we got to Manilla."

Mr. Christie returned to London after a day or two to attend to business connected with the *Geraldine.* Mr. Knight remained at Cornwood for a week, making excursions in that lovely neighbourhood with Miss Knight and Geraldine and Fred Coleridge.

"Can you bear the *sound* of the sea now, Geraldine?" said Mr. Knight, one evening, as they slowly returned home from a long ramble.

"Oh yes, uncle," replied Geraldine, blushing and laughing.

"The *sound* of the sea," repeated Fred; "I hope she can, for I shall want her to listen to it a good deal before long," and he squeezed her little hand meaningly.

"Yes," said Mr. Knight; "till you came back, and she knew you were safe, this poor child thought the sea waves full of haunting noises."

"I *could* not help it, Fred," said Geraldine, apologetically.

"But, now that you are no longer so particular," laughed Mr. Knight, "suppose we take a look at Plymouth before we return home?"

"I should like it of all things," said Geraldine, with her brightest smile.

CHAPTER XXXV.

A TEETOTAL BOOKCASE.

FRED'S father and mother did not now live in Plymouth itself; an arm of the sea stretches up far into the land, forming at high tide a beautiful little lake, upon whose eastern shore stands, sloping up to the wooded hill above, the picturesque village of Hooe. Hooe lake and woods are favourite resorts of the good people of Plymouth in the summer months. Here family parties come from bustling streets and town houses to enjoy *al fresco* teas, with their welcome accompaniments of strawberries and raspberries, mixed with the delicious Devonshire cream; and a good deal of harmless romping and pleasant love-making are associated with the name of Hooe. Things having considerably prospered with the elder Coleridge, spite of, or perhaps *because* of, his large family of children, for the lads and girls were all industrious and persevering; he had rented a good-sized comfortable house in this village, with a large garden attached, in which were arbours and bowers of all sorts and sizes, and swings of all dimensions.

for the recreation of the Plymouthians; and here, while Coleridge was away with his sons in his trawler, on the mighty ocean beyond, his wife and girls entertained numerous respectable parties, who were glad to find so thoroughly clean, convenient, and comfortable a house. The house itself, with its old porch, ivy-twined and rose-wreathed, its spotless curtains, and its bright scarlet geraniums in the windows, was on the slope of the hill leading to the beautiful woods which extended for two or three miles, as far as the residence of the gentleman to whom they belonged, and who owned the great house of the neighbourhood, Radford.

Any little awkwardness which less frank natures might have felt at the introduction of the rich merchant's adopted daughter to the trawler's family, was done away with by Fred's own honest straightforward manner, which said, as plainly as any words could have done, that he considered his father and mother, and brothers and sisters, the dearest and one of the best and pleasantest families in England; and his sweet young bride-elect the very loveliest and kindest of women. His heartiness and delight, and the easy friendliness of Mr. Knight, made Geraldine's visit to Fred's relations a very happy one. The morning after their arrival at Plymouth, Fred and his father and brother brought their largest and handsomest pleasure-boat round under the rocks, just in that very same place where, years before, Mr. Christie had watched and waited the night that the *Linda* was wrecked, and that Fred had won such a warm place in his heart by his unselfish heroism: on these rocks stood Mr. Knight and Geraldine, ready to embark for a

pleasant cruise in the beautiful bay, before the all-important visit to Hooe, where the home of Fred, meanwhile, with a good deal of anxious care on the part of Mrs. Coleridge, and of half delighted, half troubled anticipation on the part of Mary and Lucy, her elder daughters, was being set in special order for Geraldine's reception.

"I do hope she'll make herself at home," said the good woman. "Fred says she's sure to, but he doesn't know. Young ladies isn't always the same to their young men, as they is to their young men's mothers. Why, there was that Miss Fawcett, who married poor Bill Lands, she turned up her nose at everything at his father's, though she was all honey to him till after the marriage. It isn't what I should have chosen for Fred, to have picked up with a young lady so much above him, though Fred hisself is a gentleman, every inch of him, bless him!"

"But then, you know, mother," said Mary, "it isn't as if Miss Geraldine knew nothing about poor folks, or as if she wasn't one herself, in reality, as to being born amongst us."

"I'm sure," said Lucy, "if she's half as loving-looking as she is in her likeness, she will be certain to get on with us."

"I hope so, my dear: you'd better go and tell Willie and Jem to pick the raspberries; we'll give her plenty of good things to eat, at any rate. I hope father will keep them out for a good cruise—I sent plenty of provisions for their dinner, if they can make a dinner of beef and cherry pasties."

During this time, Geraldine having been carefully

assisted into the boat by Fred, took lessons in steering as she sat beside him, and joined in the pleasant talk that was going on between Mr. Knight and Fred's father, while Fred's young brother Ned looked at her as much as he dared, with most evidently admiring eyes. And she made a pretty picture, seated there in the stern of the boat, in her light dress, with her bright wavy hair, her sweet face all aglow with the delicious excitement that thrills all those who love the sea when they float swiftly over the waves, borne by a light breeze, with health and good spirits to make everything enjoyable.

"There's the poor old Mew Stone, Geraldine," whispered Fred, as they neared a large rock standing abruptly out of the water; "and out there, those cliffs, just as far as you can see, is where Captain Seymour and I passed some hours that night."

Geraldine was looking eagerly, and then her eyes came back and rested lovingly and admiringly on Fred's face. Meeting his gaze, she coloured, yet said playfully, "Hero worship is a dangerous thing, isn't it, Fred?"

"There, Miss Geraldine," said Fred's father, "we'll get a bit nearer presently, and you shall see the very place."

"Thank you, Mr. Coleridge, but please don't call me Miss; will you not call me Geraldine, as you would call your daughters Mary and Lucy?" Her sweet low voice was almost pleading in its tone.

The grave face of the elder Coleridge wore a pleased smile, as he said, "I suppose it will all come natural in time, but you seem pretty much of a lady, for me to call you by your Christian name."

"Fred finds it very easy,—I don't think he ever had much difficulty," said Geraldine, with a happy, roguish laugh, that in itself removed at once much of the restraint of the grave father; and before the Mew Stone was reached, a pleasant cordiality was established between Geraldine and her future relatives,—for she was really pleased to find how much intelligence and sense her Fred's father possessed, and was far too sensible to quibble at the defective grammar in which he sometimes expressed himself. He was a man who had thought much and learned much from his wide experience on God's great seas, and when thus on his element could tell many strange and interesting stories of the wonders he had seen. The pasties were thoroughly approved of when the dinner hour came round, and after landing at the breakwater, ascending its lighthouse, and watching the sunshiny waves, to Geraldine always a fascinating occupation, as they crept up its seaward side, higher and higher as the tide rose, Fred at length steered the boat towards Hooe, where, by this time, all indoor work was accomplished, and the mother and daughters, arrayed in their very best dresses—silks that Fred had brought to them from China—awaited their company. Geraldine was in a transport of delight at the lovely little lake with its beautifully wooded shores, and the green slopes to the water's edge; and on the beach, as the boat was brought to the landing-steps, were Willie and Jem, with the youngest Coleridge, a pretty healthy little girl of five, in white frock and blue sash, with her very fair hair in short curls all over her head, standing between them.

"Well, Rosie," said Coleridge, stepping out of the

boat, and lifting the child into his arms, "have you come down to see the pretty lady?"

"Yes," said Rosie shyly, looking at Geraldine with her large, wide-open blue eyes, and then dropping her face suddenly on her father's shoulder, as she saw that Geraldine looked and smiled at her. And now they were all out of the boat, and Mr. Knight walked on in advance with the father and his little girl, who watched, from her safe and commanding position in his arms, the approach of Fred and Geraldine, surrounded by Ned and Willie and Jem in turn. At the gate of the pretty garden stood Mrs. Coleridge, with Mary and Lucy shyly standing at their mother's side, wearing sweet flowers in their bosoms, and looking as bright and fresh and pleasant as possible.

"Let me do the introductions," said Fred laughing. "Mother—this is Geraldine," and Geraldine bounded forward to the good-looking matron, and frankly held up her pretty lips for a kiss. After that all was easy enough: it was certain that Fred's young lady had no pride, and the girls, no longer very shy, carried her off in triumph: a long chat, whilst Geraldine laid aside her hat and jacket, and her admiring words at everything pretty, in the really prettily furnished room, set them thoroughly at ease, and they went down merrily together, as if they had known each other for years. When they entered the parlour, Mr. and Mrs. Coleridge were standing with Mr. Knight before a large and well-filled bookcase, the chief ornament of the room. "That, Mr. Knight, is a temperance bookcase, and they be all temperance books," said Coleridge; "not all on the subject of teetotalism,—no, no, sir, I didn't mean to say that, but they is all got

out of what, if I'd been a drinking man, would have gone for beer or cider. When I become a teetotaller, says I to myself, I'll see what this here teetotalism will do for me; I'll save up the cost of a pint or two a day, and as for my never losing time by drinking, and things of that general sort, they shall go towards the general prosperity; and sure enough I *have* prospered. Sometimes I hardly know how it has been, but I feel sure perfect sobriety gives a working-man a chance that nothing else does. Men get to trust such a man, and jobs are put in his way—good-paying jobs too—that drinking men lose the chance of: howsomever, as I was observing, this here bookcase and its contents are not from anything of that kind, but just from the price of what I should have called a very moderate allowance for a working-man, a pint and a half a day. First of all, I saved up till I had ten pounds, and then I bought this bookcase, and then I got the big Bible there; then I saved up for a dictionary and got that; then for a gazetteer and atlases; and they cost me a brave bit of money, sir—they're all first-class works. Then I set to work to get the poets; really, I never knew, sir, what beautiful things men have written in their time till I did, though; and I think, sir, I've enjoyed some of them almost as much as anybody could. When I goes on a cruise, I takes a volume with me; and, sure enough, it passes the time beautifully. Well, sure, then I got that English history; and a fine illustrated book of Pilgrim's Progress; and another of Robinson Crusoe—them two books has picters in them well worth looking at. Then, when my elder sons went off hither and thither, I thought I'd like to know a bit about

the countries where they was gone to; so one by one I've got all sorts of histories of different lands and travels and that kind of things. Why, sir, there's a world of books to get acquainted with, as well as a world of men."

"Indeed there is," said Mr. Knight, as he looked at the well-chosen, well-bound books upon the shelves. "I really never saw a better assortment of volumes than you have here—a few on divinity too?"

"Well, yes, sir," said Coleridge with a grave smile, "I likes a heavier sort of book for Sunday reading. On that shelf, sir, you will see all the standard temperance books; those of Dr. Lees and other great writers in the cause, Benjamin Parsons and many another, some of whom are passed away, and others, I am happy to say, still alive. I hold, sir, that an ignorant teetotaller is a disgrace to the cause; every man who can read—and those who can't should learn—ought to make himself *thoroughly* acquainted with the argyments for and against his principles, and he'd find occupation for his mind in it, and interesting occupation too, sir."

"Indeed he would," said Mr. Knight. "Fred," he added, turning to the mate of the *Geraldine*, "I wonder less at your rapid progress upwards, now that I see what a blessed home-training you have had."

"My boys have helped with a book or two, towards my little library," said the father, pulling down a curious looking volume; "there, sir, that's Chinese, Fred brought it home; I often wish I could read it—it's some of the writings of their great philosopher, Confucius, I think they call him. I daresay, sir, there's wisdom hidden in those pages; and then I have French books—my Lucy

can read a little French—I'm glad to set them going at anything good and improving; with such a tribe as I have, sir, it needs some thought to keep all their hands out of mischief."

"Which would you like, my dear," said Mrs. Coleridge to Geraldine, "tea indoors or out?"

"Oh! out of doors, if you please, and if it will not be a trouble," said Geraldine brightly; "it will be beautiful."

So, in the coziest of the large-sized arbours, the party assembled to a sumptuous tea, with plenty of Devonshire dainties, rich golden saffron cake, and sweet junket, and clotted cream with ruby tinted raspberries, and large coral hued cherries ranged on the brightest of green leaves. And after tea there was a pleasant stroll in the lovely woods, where the fragrant aromatic odour of the pine trees mingled with the soft south wind, and where they stayed till the moonlight made tall, dark shadows of each giant trunk, and warned the little party from Plymouth of the lateness of the hour; so after a somewhat hasty supper and affectionate "good-byes," Fred and his young brother Willie rowed the boat back to the town, and thus ended Geraldine's introduction to the home of her lover. During the week passed at Plymouth, there were pleasant excursions in which the young Coleridges shared, and twice the whole family came to spend the day at Mr. Knight's hotel; and Miss Knight, who had by this time followed from Cornwood to join her brother and Geraldine, was gratified to find that Fred's relatives were neither boorish nor uncultivated.

CHAPTER XXXVI.

THE ASYLUM.

SUMMER had melted into autumn, and Ellen Maloney had become a hopeless dipsomaniac. The only possible way to save her—by separating her from every access to strong drink—was not open to Timothy Maloney and his son. Reasoning, coaxing, entreaty, blame—all were tried again and again, and found utterly useless; honour, honesty, decency, at last purity itself—all were sacrificed on the altar of this insatiable appetite. The love of that husband and those children, who had once been the most prized of all her possessions, was now lost. She had parted, years before, from her boy Patrick for a distant clime; but it had been with the natural outpourings of a mother's heart. When little Nelly died, she had, at least, the grace to shrink from contact with the dead child, whom during her short life she had so grievously wronged. But when poor Michael begged for a last interview with his mother, she had carelessly neglected his request; and now that Tim, as the best thing he could do for his youngest brother, sent him to join

Patrick in Canada, she seemed utterly callous at the separation from her youngest son.

She bribed the children that passed the door of the Lodge to fetch drink for her from the town; she pawned household articles, furnished by Mr. Knight, in order to supply her desires; she grasped her husband's earnings, and every article of luxury, and almost of comfort, that he obtained. There seemed to be no bound to her awful wastefulness in her riotous living; nothing was secure from her cunning artifices, and Tim saw with pain how, through this trouble and anxiety, premature old age was stealing over his father's form and features, and silvering his hair. Would that our history of Ellen Maloney were a highly-coloured misrepresentation, instead of sober truth! How few of us but can in thought turn to just such a case of miserable, dreadful drink-madness, where a woman or a man, once pure and high in moral character, has become apparently lost to every sense of right! Since her first flight to London, Ellen Maloney had, every now and then, committed similar excesses, and attacks of delirium tremens were sure to follow these outbursts. In her weakness and weariness after her recovery from this most frightful disorder, she was always penitent; wept bitterly over her folly and sin, and drew Tim's loving heart to her by every repentant word and humble action. He would even grow hopeful again as to the possibility of her reclamation; only, alas! to be renewedly disappointed. Late one evening she returned to her home after a fortnight's absence; she looked the picture of abject misery —her dishevelled hair, her scanty garments (for she had

pawned almost her last article of clothing for drink), her languid air, her wretched countenance, bespoke her long continuance in that service the wages whereof is death. She did not speak at all in answer to her husband's greeting, which, though sad, was not unkindly; but passed through the room, and up the stairs that led into the bed-room above. Timothy Maloney heard her moving about, opening and shutting drawers, and then all was still. An hour later, he made the fire safe below, and followed her. She was breathing heavily and soundly asleep when he looked at her. At early dawn the wind rose and howled around the lodge, while the rain beat in torrents against the window-panes: the noise woke the Irishman, and as he opened his eyes he saw in that dim, uncertain light the figure of his wife standing over him in her white night-dress, her eyes glaring fiercely, and in her uplifted hand the razor she had abstracted secretly the night before, and hidden beneath her pillow for hours. As he looked at her, a fierce, wild, passionate curse broke from her lips, that he had dared to wake and baffle her design; then, ere he could seize that cruel, murderous arm, she had with lightning-like rapidity slipped the razor into her other hand, and plunged it, with a hideous laugh, into his side. Timothy Maloney felt faint and terrified; but he knew well no mortal injury had been done. The red blood flowed freely from the wound, scarcely revealed by the dim, gray light: and outside, the howling wind and raging storm seemed but a transcript of the scene within. The sight of her husband's blood seemed rather to increase than allay the fury of the wretched maniac.

"I'll do for ye yet, Timothy," she exclaimed with another fearful oath. "Rid the world of a monster, and meself of a tyrant, that keeps every dhrap of whisky and gin from me lips, when he knows I will not live widout them. Och, man, ye trimble now; faith an' all the praists, and the holy saints, and the blessed Virgin herself, will not be enough to save ye, now that I have ye in me own power at last."

"Ellen," pleaded Timothy Maloney, as he strove to gain time and opportunity to slip from her presence—"Ellen, let me give ye the money before ye kill me, if ye will do it. Wait a little, and let me fetch the money for ye from the room below. I've hidden it from ye; but I will let ye have it now. Arrah, now, me girl, wait awhile, wait awhile, will ye?" for the razor in her trembling yet eager grasp still menaced him; and, to the Irishman's honour, other thoughts, even more than mere bodily fear, were pressing upon his heart. What a load of sorrow would any such event bring to his noble and dutiful young son; how it might and would blight all his hopes and prospects: and sweet, bright, beautiful Geraldine, too. For their sakes, as much as for his own, the father sought to parry the threatened blow; if only he could turn those glaring, mad eyes away from his face for an instant, all might yet be well. At that moment a wild gust of the autumn wind swept with a weird, low moaning sound around the lonely lodge, open on every side to the noise of wind and rain. Ellen Maloney started back, and crouched in a corner of the room, shrieking, "Och hone, Timothy, the cry of the banshee; sure, thin,

it's come for ye; and I'll be afther finishing me work when it will be gone by."

But as she spoke, her husband darted from the bed, and, weak as he was, managed to get outside the door and lock the miserable woman in. He dreaded lest she might inflict injuries upon herself with that sharp-edged razor; but, at least, he would save her from the guilt of murder. Hastily he stanched his wound, which was not very deep, and dressed himself in some clothes which were fortunately in a box in the little parlour; and then he stole upstairs and listened attentively at the closed door; there was only a low wailing noise within. "Ellen will be imitating the call of the banshee," he thought; and again descending the stairs, he opened the outer door, and sped away, through the dripping avenue and the wild storm, to the College. It was early to rouse its peaceful inmates; but he sorely needed his son. Standing beneath Tim's window, he called again and again that son's name. But it was not Tim's window which opened, but that of Mr. Philp: "Mr. Maloney, what is the matter?"

"Och, thin, but I'm ashamed to have wakened ye," replied the Irishman; "but I'm in sore trouble wid Tim's mother. She has a fit coming on again, and it's dangerous intirely; and would ye be willing to send Tim to me at once?"

"Can I be of any use myself?" asked kind Mr. Philp.

"Och, shure, and ye can, yer honour. It's been a case of stabbing the night; but she has not killed me at all at all; and she is out of her sinses altogither wid the

dhrink and the wild storm, and I've only escaped wid difficulty."

"I will call Tim at once," said Mr. Philp.

"Tim, rise quickly, dear lad," he said as he entered the bed-room of the young student; "your mother has returned, and I fear it is a worse time than ever with her; your father has come for you to help him."

Tim's face grew very pale. "Mother again, och! Mr. Philp, there will be no end of this trouble." He trembled visibly as he hurriedly dressed, and then bounded down to his father. Mr. Philp followed them, and as they neared the lodge, they could hear the screams of the maniac, and see her face pressed eagerly against the window as she watched their approach. Once in the lower room at the lodge, Timothy Maloney related all that had occurred, and at Mr. Philp's advice Tim hastened to Putney for the surgeon who had attended her at these terrible times, that they might consult him before again exposing her husband to her fury. Mr. Drew, the surgeon, was roused by Tim's knock for the second time that night to a drink case. He returned, however, with Tim, and at once forbade Timothy Maloney to enter his wife's presence for some days. Then with Mr. Philp and Tim he proceeded to the upper room. As they opened the door, Ellen Maloney started forward and brandished her weapon with a yell of triumph; but when she failed to meet her husband's frightened gaze, she shrank back a little, sobbing piteously. The surgeon caught her arm, disengaged her hand from the razor, though with some difficulty—so tight was her fevered grasp—and gave it to Tim. He shuddered as

he marked the dull stains on its bright surface, and knew how nearly he had been the son of a murderess. The doctor, a stalwart man, then caught up the maniac in his arms, and was about to lay her on the bed. He started at the sight of the gory sheets, and hurriedly led her back to the window.

"Mr. Tim, will you—can you—set that bed to rights, and quickly?"

Tim bustled about with a sickening sense of shame, and degradation, and disgust, making his heart throb and his cheeks burn. Then they laid her down, and the doctor strapped the poor murderous hands to her side, and bound her feet, and laid cloths steeped in cold vinegar upon the hot temples; and when her struggles had somewhat ceased, and the lids drooped over the wild, glaring eyes, he took his leave, but bade them watch her carefully until he came again. Mr. Philp and Tim—one on each side of that sick-bed, from which God's peace was so manifestly absent—sat and watched the guilty sufferer. No words were exchanged; quiet was essential to her sleep; a word spoken loudly might arouse her to wakefulness and passionate resistance. In those hours Tim had time to think. It seemed to him, as he sat there and listened to the soughing of the wind and the ceaseless patter of the rain outside, with his eyes fixed on the care-worn dissolute face of his mother before him, that human laws were very cruel; that the devil's power was irresistible; that even God's justice was hard to understand. It was cruel that, with the knowledge of such cases as that of his poor guilty mother, the Legislature did not remove the licensed temptations

to drink from the paths of the people; cruel that it did not, at least, give the people the power to remove them if the majority so willed.

"It is not," thought Tim, "like an article *necessary* or *useful* to man; then, even if some people abused its use, it must still be sold. But people are better without than with strong drink, even in moderation. And, O God, save all others from the miseries of drunkenness. Have I not known enough in my short life of twenty-two years to make me hate strong drink with all the power I have had given me to hate the children of the devil? Cannot wiser men, more educated men, more experienced men, see for themselves, if they would but open their eyes, the curse under which the nations are labouring?"

Tim puzzled and wearied his brain with many questionings—much of that mental conflict through which all men and women must dare to pass who desire to know sympathy with others and strength in themselves.

Then the doctor came, and found his patient still sleeping.

"We must get a nurse for her, Mr. Tim; and your father must keep altogether out of her way."

Biddy Simmons was installed as nurse, glad to be able in any way to show her gratitude to Tim for his countless kind acts to her and to her children. Ellen Maloney was ill for many weeks. A worse fit than she had ever had before was upon her now, and she raved, and struggled, and shrieked, and moaned, while the most horrible of phantoms flitted across her disordered brain.

Mr. Knight and Mr. Philp, after much talking between themselves, proposed to Timothy Maloney and his son

that they should find some asylum for her, in which she would be kept under restraint and altogether separated, for a while at any rate, from her family.

"There is a surgeon who resides in Waterton Circus," said Mr. Knight, "who takes such patients as your wife into his house; and I know they are very comfortably attended to there; but it is necessary that we should obtain her sanction to this plan. It is positively dangerous that she should be any longer at liberty."

"Ah, yer honour, but I will niver be afther putting her into a madhouse," said the husband, warmly.

"You entirely mistake me, if you think I would deem that a desirable step," said Mr. Knight. "This surgeon's house has in no way a right to such a designation. The inmates, and there are only four, are treated with the utmost consideration and kindness. They are only restrained on two points,—they are not permitted to go out alone, nor to touch any intoxicating liquor. They either sit with the lady of the house, who is a most agreeable woman, or in their own rooms, which are large, separate to each, and furnished with sofa and table, as well as bed, so as to serve for both bed-room and sitting-room. I have been over the house, and made many inquiries elsewhere respecting it."

"I fear, yer honour," said Tim, "that it is out of our power to afford such an asylum to my poor mother. It would be a hundred a-year at the least. If I was earning anything—"

"That need not trouble you in the matter. I have a surplus in hand of what I call my temperance income; and if you can only persuade your mother now, in this

calm, lucid interval, to try the plan, I shall be truly delighted to place the needed money at your disposal.—Mr. Maloney, what do you say?"

"That I will niver be able to repay yer honour," said the Irishman, while great tears stood in his eyes and ran over his cheeks. "If me Ellen will but be made a sober woman of, I'll niver cease to praise ye, and the Lord that sent ye."

Ellen Maloney was willing enough now to try any means of escape from her deadly foe; and in another fortnight No. 18 Waterton Circus, the residence of Mr. Hunt, surgeon, received another inmate; and it was arranged for Biddy Simmons to stay on at the lodge, at all events for the present.

CHAPTER XXXVII.

STUDENT LIFE.

THE winter following Ellen Maloney's removal to the asylum was a very busy one to Tim. He entered into the pursuit of intellectual acquirements with the keen relish and zeal of a clever active mind bent upon gaining information, and enlarging its own mental scope. Every language with which he became acquainted was as the door to a goodly palace, and when this door was unlocked there were revealed countless hidden treasures, and precious gems of thought, and the untold blessing of close contact with the utterances of noble minds. Tim, too, was extremely anxious to correct the faults of his oratory, to perfect his action, which was, however, naturally graceful and full of meaning, and in this respect widely different from that of some of the other students, who extremely amused their preceptor by squaring their shoulders, raising their arms, pointing their fingers, and nodding their heads at most inappropriate portions of their discourse. Two of the young men, after much patient

labour had been bestowed upon them, discovered, to their disappointment, that they were altogether unfit for the work to which they had desired to devote themselves; a third, in whom thickness of brain and self-conceit prevented this conviction from penetrating, was frankly told that Knight's Temperance College was not the proper place for him, as public speaking would never be his forte; and three new lads were chosen in place of these. The home-life of the College was extremely useful to the students. There were no untidy rooms, no carelessly served meals, no hurried toilets, such as would have been the case had they lived bachelor lives in lodgings. The presence of two refined and cultivated women, such as Mrs. and Miss Philp, at their table, prevented slatternliness, and necessitated politeness in them all; and almost without knowing it they acquired the ease and polish which good breeding of this kind alone can give. In addition to this, Tim's naturally easy manners received all that they might hitherto have lacked, from his constant intercourse with Minnie Christie, whose strong good sense, and refinement of feeling and thought, and intense interest in all that interested Tim, were especially useful to him. The masculine and feminine minds, when met in such close relationship as theirs, are both improved; class and sex prejudices melt away, and the result is a widening of sympathies, and a broader, grander, fuller mental horizon, wherein petty things look their natural size, and only the really great issues of time and eternity occupy much space.

Once a week meetings were held in the College lecture-hall, as had been proposed, whereat two or three of the

students addressed the audience, the rest forming a critical committee to take notes of all grammatical blunders and faults of delivery in their companions; and much sharpening of wits resulted from this plan. Woe be to the young critic whose own grammar was proved to be at fault, and not the lecturer's, or who misjudged the propriety of anecdote and gesture! These criticisms always formed the basis of the breakfast-table conversation on the following day; and many warm discussions and arguments took place concerning them—the two ladies at the head and foot of the table being appealed to by turns as umpires.

There were often other discussions between the young men; indeed, they seldom met at meals without some particular point of difference between a certain two of them being in dispute. Walter Allen, a fine handsome young man of twenty-two, dark-skinned, black-haired, with keen dark eyes and aquiline nose—the very opposite of Tim Maloney in outward appearance as he was in mental characteristics—was, however, the young Irishman's chosen friend; and yet, as was perhaps natural, with no other did he have so many arguments and differences of opinion. There were broad thoughts and feelings in perfect harmony between them; but in the minor points that make up the vexed questions of human life, they combated each other's views with great alacrity and spirit. There was another matter regarding temperance work on which they could never agree: while Tim believed most fully that Bands of Hope were the chief bulwarks of this great reform, Walter conceived that adult societies were the really useful means of

grappling with strong drink. "I think you sadly waste your time Tim," he said, one day, "in spending so many evenings amongst those unappreciative youngsters in Candlemas Alley, you, who are so fit to talk to men. What is the use of graceful action, and witty turns, and grand perorations, if you squander them upon children who can't half understand them?"

"Shure now," said Tim, with his beautiful smile, "who would say that the blessed children are unappreciative? why, wasn't I once a child meself? and didn't I appreciate? Ah, Walter! if it hadn't been for the men who condescended to speak to children, and to take special pains to lift the children out of the drink bog, shure and I'd have been struggling in it yet, up to my head entirely, or even—who knows?—perhaps by this time I would have been under it altogether."

"There are not many boys like you were, Tim," said Walter, with a very full belief in his words; "and I hold that a great deal of the labour spent upon the children is thrown away—'Love's labours lost.' Not half the boys and girls that take the Band of Hope pledge keep it—they can't be expected to. Of course, if their fathers and mothers drink, they'll be likely to do so too."

"One might think so," rejoined Tim, "at first sight; but I know it was just that that made me hate the drink with such intensity. Oh, I said to myself, when I was but a broth of a boy—oh, if father and mother didn't take the nasty whisky and gin inside of their lips, what a different place the home might be at all at all! And when I understood about it from the Band of Hope meetings, I determined I'd never make such a home for

my wife and children, if ever I got them," added Tim, smiling. "There's many a little child at this hour whose prayer, if it knew how to pray, would be, 'From all the misery of strong drink and drunken parents, good Lord, deliver us.' Then you say about the little ones breaking their pledge; did you break yours, man? did any of us, boys?" and he glanced at the other students as he spoke. "Did we ever break our Band of Hope pledge?"

One of them coloured as Tim asked this question. "I did, Tim," he whispered; "'twas at a Christmas party, and I was badly tempted; but I signed again at the New Year, and that was the only time."

"And ye're a brave lad to tell us of it, when I did not mean to set up a confessional, and appoint meself praist," said Tim, with a look of affection at the youth who had spoken. "Well, however, one broken pledge out of twelve (and that one was soon mended) isn't making your words good, Walter; 'tisn't half, nor anything like half. A twelfth part is a small half of an orange, I'm thinkin'." They all laughed.

"Not a half that Walter would like to take," said one.

"But we are picked fellows," said Walter Allen, good-humouredly, "specially good Band of Hope boys, or else not worthy to be invested with the dignity of studentship in this most perfect and most delightful of colleges. I don't believe I am far wrong, when I say that not above half the children keep their pledge."

"And what proportion of adults keep theirs?" asked Tim.

"I never calculated that," replied Walter, "but certainly far more than half."

"I should not like to take my affirmation to either of

your statements," said another of the students; "the number of those who break their pledge is one of those statistical facts which are extremely difficult to be ascertained with any amount of certainty."

"Well, even leaving that question," resumed Walter, "before these Band of Hope children can grow up, a great chapter of the world's history will have been written on the pages of time—a chapter in which they will play no active part; and while we work for them and with them, we really do nothing for the present welfare of our country."

"Walter, ye will never have had a little brother or sister?" queried Tim.

"I am the youngest of our family," he said.

"That makes a difference," Tim replied, gravely; "if ye had known, as I have, the power, the almost boundless influence of the little children, ye would not think that Band of Hope work *can* be too highly reckoned; if ye had heard my little sister, my little darlint Nelly, how she would plead with the big grown-up people round her; if ye had seen the power she gained over her father to make him listen to her; if ye knew how a little child, my other sister, Geraldine, when she was small, led our good Mr. Knight to go to the temperance meeting with her, and to take the pledge; if ye knew the thousands of things I could tell you, even from my little experience, of the influence of the children on the men and women, ye would think the children the very best temperance teachers going."

"You can make children do and say anything," said Walter, "but they haven't much solidity."

"You'd find many as firm as yourself, Walter," said Tim; "and then, with their pretty artless ways, they say a word for temperance where men and women can't. Don't ye think, man, to see those thousands of teetotal children in the orchestra at the Crystal Palace last September, and to hear them singing their temperance songs and hymns, were a sight and a sound that went straight into many a heart, that would have shut itself up against your teaching or mine? Almost every one that isn't quite brutalised by evil passions, or altogether maddened by drink, has *some* tender spot in his heart, warm with love for little children, and it glows afresh as he looks upon young innocent faces, as yet untainted by heinous sins, and listens to clear young voices, in which still linger something of the spotless angels' tones; and together the faces and the voices pull down prejudices, open his eyes and his heart to see and feel the blessedness of that work that can do anything to save the little ones from temptation and sorrow."

"But isn't it a greater work still," said Walter, "to rescue the fully-developed man or woman, whose matured powers would be henceforth given to God's service, than to spend one's time educating the children up to ability for usefulness?"

"Would you rather save the blighted rose from another mildew, or keep the little rosebud untainted altogether?" asked Tim. "Just think about it, Walter; it is so much better to know nothing about sin, than to be merely saved from its most awful punishment; better for one never to tell a lie, than to break one's self of the habit of lying; better never to begin to steal, than

to resolve to steal no more; better to keep pure and unspotted from the world, than to wash away the stains by sore repentance; better, oh, better a thousandfold never to touch, taste, nor handle intoxicating liquors, than to turn from the cup with pain and bitter grief, when we have learned that 'at the last it biteth like a serpent, and stingeth like an adder.' God knows that as I look upon the countless little children that throng about me and gaze into my face, a great prayer goes up from my heart to Him, that He will be pleased to make me the instrument of *preservation* to these dear little lambs of His fold, from the thousand snares that beset them in the drink-lined thoroughfares of our great city."

There was a pause, and then old Mrs. Philp said gently and kindly, "I don't think you need hesitate, my dear young friends, to work in any and every branch of this great movement; it is well, perhaps, that you *don't* all see alike as to the most needful part of the work. I believe our Tim is most admirably adapted by his great love for the children and his winning manners to save them from the very beginnings of the accursed sin of intemperance; Walter, perhaps, may find his forte more in talking to grown-up people and striving to rescue the fallen ones; others of you may see fit to devote yourselves to the legislative work of the temperance cause. But of this one thing you may be quite sure, that no man who has put his hand to the temperance plough, as in God's sight, should dare at this juncture, when work is most urgently needed, to look back for a single instant; no, no, my sons, I might call you, for I love you almost as my children, *press forward*, fight in this temperance

battle a good fight, and God will assuredly give you the victory."

But Tim's labours were not confined to lecturing to the children, his Bible class of young men was the largest in the College, and, in addition to this, he devoted one day every week to visiting the worst haunts of London with temperance and religious tracts, and his little pocket Bible. It would never be known on earth the zeal and devotion with which Tim laboured for the dear Master he loved so well; and every day, every month, his bright sweet character grew in holiness and joy; his mirth was not less than formerly—his wit flashed as gaily as ever—his fun was overflowing; he had no sympathy whatever, he often said, for a long-faced Christianity; he did not believe that God meant us to pull down our mouths and turn up our eyes when we spoke one to another of the great salvation He had offered to us through Christ. "Religion," he often said to Minnie, "is the bright golden thread that weaves together the little crown of flowers that makes my happiness in this life—and you, my darlint, are the very biggest flower in that crown, a sweet royal red rose, Minnie mavourneen. I think, darlint, that if we all walked more in God's sunshine we should often miss even the sight of the threatening storms, and so they would not terrify us a bit; 'tis our fear, our mistrust, our want of faith in God's fatherhood, that makes us such puny, sad-hearted Christians."

"Tim, one would think you had no troubles to bear, that God's chastening hand was not laid upon you," Minnie said, looking up wonderingly at the beaming face that gazed so fondly down upon her own.

"That's not it, mavourneen," Tim replied; "'tis I know 'He never afflicts willingly nor grieves the children of men.' He wants me to be as joyous as I can, and I keep thinkin' how much worse everything might have been for me—the father might not have been reformed, or the poor mother might have taken away his dear life in her madness, and I might not have had ye at all at all; and then what would I have done if ye had not loved me, or if Mr. Christie had said me nay?"

"How could I help loving you, Tim?" said Minnie, still gazing at Tim's bright, wondrously bright face, so beautiful with its joyous peace, and thinking of Tim's goodness, and saying over to herself with a secret dread at her heart, "And they beheld His face as it had been the face of an angel."

"Tim," she said, involuntarily, after a pause, "do you know, dear, you sometimes look brighter almost than I can bear to see you; it doesn't seem like earthly brightness? I am almost afraid," and the tears came into her eyes, "that you are getting too good for me; I am not growing in holiness as you are."

"Nonsense, darlint," and Tim's blue eyes were full of tears now; "if ye half knew me, Minnie, and the blackness inside, that wants washing away every hour of every day, ye wouldn't feel like that, mavourneen; 'tis a weakness of us who love so much. *I* often think how pure and white *your* soul is, when I think of my own follies and sins; but it isn't wisdom, you know, darlint, to 'compare ourselves with ourselves,'—we must look to the spotless One, and then we see our own faults, and each other's characters as they really are."

But many besides Minnie noticed how self-denying and self-forgetting Tim grew ; his kindnesses were so gracefully, so naturally rendered, that people seemed almost to forget how kind he was. The students almost idolized him ; the poor of Putney came to him in their troubles. Geraldine felt the utmost pride in him ; his father leaned upon him for advice, for counsel, for almost everything ; while in the Christies' pleasant home he was the sunshine of Minnie, the welcome friend of her brothers, and the cherished son of her parents.

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

THE YOUNG CAPTAIN.

DURING the winter months the *Geraldine* was in dock, for she had undergone much damage by the rough treatment she had received, and was by no means seaworthy. Captain Seymour had been appointed to the command of another of Messrs. Knight and Christie's vessels, whose captain had become ill, and was very unlikely to be able to resume his post; and he was now off again in the *Queen of the Waves* for another long voyage. This time Fred Coleridge did not accompany him. Fred was sufficiently amphibious to be able to prove himself useful on land as well as sea, and Mr. Knight found many things for him to attend to at the counting-house, so Geraldine had a joyous and pleasant time after her long anxiety, and grew more bright and beautiful than ever.

Soon after Christmas Fred began to grow impatient, and to desire very earnestly that their marriage should take place before he again left England. Geraldine hesitated: "I am still very young to get married, Fred; and what would uncle Knight say, and aunt?"

"I suppose they would not say much," said Fred, laughing; "perhaps they would think us a trifle imprudent; you especially, Geraldine, to marry a 'mate,' instead of waiting for years till he became captain; but don't you love me well enough to trust yourself to me?"

"But then I could not go with you, Fred."

"No, that is the worst; but I want to *have* you, Geraldine, to have you bearing my name, to have you for my wife, to feel that no other could by any miserable possibility make you forget me."

"Did I forget you before?" asked Geraldine shyly in a low voice, and colouring deeply; "did you find me untrue? Can't you believe that I should be faithful to you always?"

He answered her by kisses, and then said: "I shall speak to Mr. Knight, Geraldine, and see how he feels, and what he will say. Ah! if I only had my own little ship, and you my own beautiful wife in the cabin of it, I should like nothing better than to be on the water to-morrow; I do long for a taste of the salt sea again —I hope you will get as fond of it as I am, darling."

"Can you give me half an hour, Mr. Knight?" Fred said a day or two later, after the dinner at Woburn Square had been dispatched, and they were about to settle down to various pursuits.

"Certainly, Fred." Mr. Knight rose and went to his study, the young mate followed; then they seated themselves before the cheerful fire and Fred began.

"Mr. Knight, will you give your consent to our marriage before I set sail again?"

"But a mate can't take his wife with him, Fred."

"I know sir, that is the only difficulty."

"Not quite," replied Mr. Knight, smiling; "do you suppose that a mate's wages will keep Geraldine in any degree of comfort, such as she has been accustomed to? You are not selfish, Fred; do you seriously think it would be for Geraldine's happiness that you should be married to her before you have a ship?"

Fred's beaming, hopeful face grew dull, and wore a disappointed look; but he said, steadily: "I am afraid not, sir, but I did want to feel she was altogether my own before I left her."

Mr. Knight sat silently musing for many minutes; perhaps the romance of his early manhood was in his thoughts now, as it so often had been of late. Fred did not interrupt him.

"Fred," said Mr. Knight at last, "are you prepared to pass the necessary examination as captain of a ship?"

The young sailor started. "Mr. Knight, sir—captain!" was all he could say.

The merchant smiled. "How would it suit your views, Fred, to study hard for the next two or three months, and after you had taken your nautical degree, become captain of the good ship *Geraldine*, with another Geraldine for chief mate, eh?"

Fred jumped from his chair, seized the merchant's hand, and shook it eagerly; while he exclaimed, his whole countenance aglow with deepest joy, "Oh, Mr. Knight, it is a great deal too good to be true."

"Not quite, Fred. I have had the thought in my mind for some time, and have talked it all over with Mr. Christie. It is altogether improbable that Captain Grant

will ever set sail in the *Queen of the Waves* again, and so Captain Seymour is well provided for: so highly do we esteem him, as you know, that we should not have deprived him of the command of the *Geraldine* except to give him something better; and I know, Fred, it will gratify you to learn that *he* was very anxious indeed you should be made captain in his place. His appointment to the other ship of course leaves the *Geraldine* without a captain, and I offer the post to you, Fred, provided you will use all diligence to fit yourself for your important work; if we did not think very highly of you, you may be quite sure we should not pay so young a man so high a compliment. You are dear to me, Fred, as one so tenderly beloved by my Geraldine must necessarily be; but I have seen in you for years that high moral standard, that true Christian bearing, that perfect sobriety and firmness of character, that implicit obedience to the orders of your superiors, and that consideration to your inferiors, which convince me you are of the right sort of stuff to command men. I shall expect that the *Geraldine* will become a model ship, with a God-fearing, teetotal captain, a God-fearing, teetotal crew, all fully resolved to do their duty to their employers, to each other, and to all men."

"And I humbly trust, dear Mr. Knight, that you may never regret your very great kindness."

Weeks, months passed away, and at the beginning of April, after studying hardly and perseveringly, Fred obtained a first-class master's certificate, to Geraldine's great satisfaction and pleasure. And now Mr. Knight was busily superintending the preparation of the "float-

ing home" of his adopted child—the cabins of the *Geraldine.* Never were there more thoroughly comfortable apartments on board a merchantman than these; a bookcase, a piano, and the prettiest as well as most substantial of furniture and appointments, found their way into the captain's cabin and sleeping berth: the affectionate heart and hands, that had for seventeen years done all in their power to please the beautiful child he had adopted so kindly, so lovingly, as his own, seemed to linger longer than ever upon these, his last efforts on her behalf, while she still shared the home that would so soon be darkened by her absence from it. "We cannot keep things as they were, however pleasant it might be for some of us to do so," thought Mr. Knight. "My Geraldine will be full of life, and love, and joy in these little rooms; while I, in poor solitary Woburn Square, shall mourn the faded sunlight of that glorious dream of beauty which has been before me so long, in every wave of her bright flowing hair, and every glance of her blue eyes, and every smile on her lovely face. Well, well, at least I have the College, and by-and-by there will be Tim's pleasant home to visit; and I am getting an elderly man too: life slips away from us so imperceptibly, that we are wont to cling more than we need to passing objects, and fancy we shall miss them for years, when it may only be for weeks or days."

Fred was busy choosing his crew. It was no small satisfaction to him when Messrs. Knight and Christie proposed that one of his own younger brothers might be provided for in the *Geraldine:* he chose Willie, whom we have seen at Hooe, a bright active lad of about four-

teen, devotedly fond and very proud of his kind elder brother, and who was delighted to be apprenticed as Fred had been, and to sail for his first voyage to foreign shores under Captain Fred Coleridge.

Watson, who had been a teetotaller some time, was first mate ; Isaac, the black man, who evinced considerable ability as a sailor, and possessed a warm affection for the young captain, was made boatswain ; and Fred gradually gathered together a group of sixteen, as fine active sailors as one could easily see.

At the head of all these, with Watson by his side, and the second mate bringing up the rear with Isaac, he one evening marched to Candlemas Alley, when Tim Maloney was to speak in the hall to the children of the Band of Hope. At the close of Tim's very earnest and eloquent address, a gilt edged, handsomely bound book was produced from the young captain's pocket, and as he laid it on the table, for the first time in his life Fred Coleridge made a speech in public. This is what he said, while Geraldine, sitting in her usual place beside Minnie Christie, listened rather nervously : "Now, you boys and girls, I and my mates have come in here to attend to the good words that a very dear friend of mine and yours—our Tim [cheers]—has had to say to us [applause]. I and my men are about to sail, in the course of a few weeks, in the good little ship *Geraldine*, for a cruise to the Azores and the Levant ; and when we come back from that, we shall be bound for China. I don't believe in the drink at all [hear, hear, and more cheers]—that is, *intoxicating* drink : I don't believe in it on shipboard nor in houses on land ; I think

every sailor would do himself a lot of good if he gave up its use. There are some of you boys here to-night that are sailors, I see, and I daresay you know of many and many a thing that has gone wrong on board because of the grog ['that's true, captain;' and cheers], so I'm not going to have any grog on board my ship; and my jolly tars here have agreed to do without it, not only on board ship, but in port as well. You know how sailors are tempted in port, how they lose their money, and what's worse, their honour and their virtue, through the drink; you know how the money that should go to mothers and sisters is squandered on wretched girls, who are decked out shamelessly, and tempt sailors to the drink-shops and to their ruin. I, as captain of my men, desire, God knows, to set them an example that they may follow with safety: I long that they and I should all be pure and brave and true—what English tars ought to be; and to help us to this," and Fred took up the beautiful volume as he spoke, "I have got this book, in which we are all going to sign our names, and if we any of us act dishonourably or break our pledge, or offend our God by using His holy name in vain, the date of our sin is to be written down in this book, and it will mar its fair white pages. We have come here to-night to sign our names before you all, and to make known this our covenant between each other, as in God's sight. Amen." And Fred, taking the pen from Tim's hand, wrote in clear characters these words: "I promise, by God's help, to abstain from the use of all intoxicating drinks as beverages, to live a pure and virtuous life, and to refrain from swearing."

"Frederick Coleridge, Captain of the *Geraldine*."

Each of the others then wrote his name, and afterwards Fred read over to the children the promise and the list, and sat down amidst loud cheering from the excited juveniles : Mr. Knight added a few words of sympathy and earnest hopefulness, that the promise now so solemnly made would be faithfully kept, and the meeting ended with singing and the benediction.

Minnie and Geraldine were busy as bees, and joyous as larks, at Woburn Square, amongst the feminine preparations for the wedding ; and Miss Knight, never fond of the wearisome surroundings of milliners and dressmakers, left all superintendence of them to the good taste of the bride and chief bridesmaid. Tim and Fred looked into Geraldine's boudoir, which had been dedicated to the reception of the various materials to be "made up" for the fair bride, time after time, to find the girls half buried in muslins and aærophanes and gauzes, with bright-tinted ribbons, and gaily-coloured silks, and rich, warm-hued velvets for a background to the picture.

"What will ye be afther makin' now thin, darlints?" Tim would say, catching up a train of gauzy material adorned with knots of ribbon or sprigs of flowers ; and laughingly the young girls would catch it from his hands, and declare such a grasp as his would ruin it altogether.

"Och ! shure, thin, I'd rather be dressed in somethin' more substantial intirely," Tim would rejoin, and make another raid on the most delicate of head-dresses (yclept "bonnets" by courtesy), till another exclamation warned him of danger ahead, from his rough contact with the flimsy materials. The young captain did not attempt such close criticism and investigation of his bride's abundant

trousseau ; he seated himself as gravely amongst the "fantasies," as Tim called them, as an elephant might amongst a bed of flowers, contented to watch the nimble and skilful fingers of Geraldine, as they darted in and out amongst ribbons and flowers and lace.

"Ye'll be afther setting up a milliner's show-room in Hong Kong, Geraldine?" questioned Tim, with his laughter-kindling smile; "and when I've nothing betther to do, I'll come out and make up the books for ye."

"Do be quiet, Tim ; you've made me prick my finger."

"Shure, now, and what will be the cost of that?" asked Tim, gravely. "I hope the blood is not trickling from the wound at all at all. Fred, ye look angry enough to fight me for it ; shure, now, and I'll forgive you for that same ; it's not I that would like to see the man that would cause my Minnie to shed tears, say nothing about blood, for him."

"Tim, you are dreadfully foolish to-day," laughed Geraldine. "Minnie, why *don't* you keep him in order?"

"I've given up trying, long ago," said Minnie.

Tim sprang to her side, threw his arms round her neck, and covered her lips with kisses.

"Tim, Tim," she said, merrily, as soon as she could speak, "will you never learn manners, sir?"

The "millinery establishment," as Tim chose to call Geraldine's boudoir, grew to be a favourite rendezvous of the gentlemen who claimed a right to enter : here Mr. Knight often paused a few minutes to chat with Minnie and Geraldine ; and here Mr. Christie would enter whenever, as he said, was now nearly always the case,

he came to the dining-room at Woburn Square and could not find his daughter. Men, perhaps, have a little more admiration for the pretty things of which their tasteful women-folk make bonnets and wedding-veils and dresses, than they are generally willing to admit; it was fun, as the sweet bride often said, to see how critically Fred eyed her performances, with as much interest as if it were a sail well set, or a rope of the rigging properly adjusted.

"Should this spray go here or there, Minnie?" asked Geraldine, placing the ivy leaves she held on one side and the other of the white tulle bonnet.

"It's meself that will tell ye," Tim answered; "just put it on both."

"Tim, how can you be so silly?"

"I really don't think it matters, Geraldine," said Minnie.

"Nor do I," added Tim with mock solemnity; "at least, I know it will be of small matther in a hundred years."

"Young men, young men, are you idling here?" said Mr. Christie's voice, as he opened the door slowly and held it in his hand.

"Come in, papa," said Minnie, "come in, we are keeping them out of harm's way."

"Very good, very good, my dear, so far as it goes; but it is a question whether you haven't been the means of getting them into harm's way first of all; and now you're obliged to set them down amongst a lot of finery to keep them in anything like order and content; weddings are fussy things, make haste and get yours over, my dear Geraldine."

"Here, Mr. Christie, here is a seat," she said, in answer, gathering up a pile of ribbons from a chair, and leaving it empty for the merchant; "sit down amongst us also, and you will grow less critical."

"I know a little honey catches a good many flies," laughed Mr. Christie, as he, nevertheless, obeyed. And then the conversation grew merrier than ever, for Mr. Christie and Tim were well stocked, the one with English humour, the other with Irish wit, while Fred's quaint, dry sentences were as fuel to the fire, and the girls laughed till needles and thread were useless in their pretty hands.

CHAPTER XXXIX.

WEDDING FAVOURS.

IF, as some say, every woman may claim to have looked "pretty" at least once in her life, she surely has the best chance of doing so upon her marriage morn, when wedding garments so choice and so lovely help to set off every grace and to hide all deficiencies. Geraldine Maloney needed no setting off, and had no blemishes to hide in her beautiful face and form; yet even she had never looked quite so lovely as when she stood in her pleasant bedroom in Woburn Square, the home that had sheltered her so many years, now to be her home no longer, waiting for the carriage to convey her to church. Minnie Christie, as chief bridesmaid and dearest friend, had also been the tasteful lady's-maid on that auspicious morning: she it was who had lovingly robed Tim's sister in the spotless white silk dress, with its softly-floating trimmings of lace, looped with white rosebuds; around the bride's head was a coronet of pearls formed of that identical necklace which Fred had given to her

so many years before, and for which she had that kind of affection which loving women are apt to set upon special love-gifts. The pearls were now entwined round orange-blossom, and from this coronet descended the flowing lace veil which should hide and yet reveal the sweet face underneath ; the bright hair and brilliant complexion of the lovely bride were beautifully contrasted by the whiteness of her dress ; and in one hand she held a bouquet of fair flowers, white roses, and lilies of the valley, and orange-blossom, no colour visible save the varieties of white, and the beautiful green of their leaves.

"Darling, you do look well," said Minnie, with enthusiasm, as she kissed Geraldine's blushing cheek ; "now, do just look at yourself ; did you ever see a prettier bride?"

"What a shame, Minnie!" said Geraldine ; but as she raised her bright blue eyes to the cheval glass opposite her, she could not help feeling glad of the charms that must make her so fair in the sight of her lover-husband. "It will be your turn next, dear," she added ; "I hope you will wait till we have returned, though I can't be your bridesmaid."

"My turn ! oh, it will, it must be a good while first," said Minnie, laughing, but colouring deeply. "You will be an 'auld wife' before I am a young one ; I shall come to you for advice, dear Mrs. Coleridge."

"Minnie, you are like your father, you are a dreadful tease," said Geraldine ; "but do make haste, dear, and get on with your dressing, or the carriage will come and you won't be ready."

"My dear, I never kept anybody waiting for me," said Minnie; and whilst she talked she was busy arraying herself in her robe of pale pink silk and white muslin fastened by bouquets of blush roses and lilies of the valley—a wreath of the same flowers adorned her dark braids of hair. In another room Mary and Lucy Coleridge attired themselves in blue tarletan dresses, with wreaths of forget-me-nots round their heads. Poor, little, blind Kitty, dressed very prettily in white muslin; her sightless eyes hidden from view by the shade she always wore, was to walk between the Coleridge girls at her sister's wedding, and was feeling highly pleased and important; a bright ray of the sunshine of Geraldine's love had illuminated the gloom of her existence. Dear little Kitty, all through her life, whether it were long or short, she must bear the sad, sad impress in her darkened eyes of a drunken mother's neglect of her youngest-born.

Soon there was a noisy rolling of carriages in the square outside; and the white horses, gay with wedding favours, pawed the ground, while the drivers in their white gloves, and with spruce knots of white satin ribbon in their button-holes, came in one after another to the hall, where, from a long table, Ann and Martha served them with lemonade or coffee and rich cake. They all agreed it was as good fare as they had ever had, though there was no intoxicating liquor; and Mr. Knight showed he had no disposition to grudge them the money wine would have cost him, by giving each man half-a-crown instead of it. The men told the servant girls, bright and smiling in their new dresses and gay caps, that they should

like such teetotal weddings every day; and Ann answered them, merrily,—

"Who wouldn't? But 'tisn't every day, I tell you, you can see such a lovely bride as we've got in the house."

Presently the bridal party came down-stairs to the dining-room, then they all entered the carriages and drove away. Minnie, and Geraldine, and Mr. Knight were in the first carriage; the good merchant's heart was full of very mixed feelings. It was a hard trial to him to part from his darling child, whom he had loved so long and tenderly—hard to feel that soon his home would be empty of her sweet presence, and that she would be wandering over the world with her sailor-husband, far from the friends who loved her so fondly. But when he looked at her bright young face, so happy, so trustfully content, he silenced what he called his selfish thoughts, and was ever ready with a pleasant smile or word for his adopted child.

It had been decided by Timothy Maloney himself that Mr. Knight should act as Geraldine's father, and give her away to Fred Coleridge at the church.

"Och, shure, yer honour, I gave her to ye when I had not the manes to do rightly by her; and ye have acted like a raal faythe, and a gintleman, and a Christian to me Geraldine; and it's ye shall take the place ye ought to on the day."

Tim was, of course, to be Fred's groomsman; and it was arranged that Ellen Maloney should join the party at breakfast, though it was not thought advisable for her to go to church. She was now so much improved in

every way that when she modestly asked to walk to Woburn Square without an escort, Dr. Hunt granted her request quite willingly.

A drive through the hazy city air, just clearing itself from the fogs of the river and the smoke of the chimneys, by aid of the bright spring sunshine, brought the wedding party to the door of the church, where they were met by the young captain, looking very handsome indeed in his smart sailor's costume, which it was Geraldine's particular wish he should wear; she thought it suited his manly face so well. Tim stood beside him, ready to give a bright glance first of all to Minnie, and then to the blushing bride. The church was much crowded, for even in self-absorbed London there were a good many people who were interested in Geraldine's romantic history, and who admired her wonderful beauty; so ladies came to see her dress and her sailor-lover, and her brother, the witty young Irishman; and gentlemen came to admire the lovely bride herself. No one was disappointed. The plain, old-fashioned church, with only one painted glass window and high pews, was lit up for the occasion by a flood of sunshine, which gilded the altar, and rested in radiant beauty on the bright-haired Geraldine as she knelt before it; her own heart, free at that moment from all thoughts of vanity, only conscious of that solemn Presence in which she stood, and in which she and Fred took each other to be man and wife before all the world, as they had long ago plighted their sacred troth in secret. And then she stood beside him, she felt the ring encircle her finger, she made the required responses, but it all seemed like a dream; and the bells

that pealed out noisily from the old tower above—the old, practical, city church tower, with not a leaf of ivy around it to redeem its plain, straightforward masonry —first recalled her from that dream, first made her realize her new position. Fred led her, with his strong arm guiding her footsteps, into the vestry, and then lifted her veil and gave her such a warm, earnest, sailor-like kiss, that it made all the party laugh; and Tim quickly followed suit upon Minnie's lips, and then upon the bride's, while Mr. Knight, affected almost to tears, clasped Geraldine in his arms, and as he did so saw bright tear-drops in her violet eyes. "God bless you, my children," he said, taking Fred's hand, and giving him back his beautiful young wife.

They drove home to the handsome wedding breakfast, hearing the music of those marriage-bells till it was lost in the roar and din of the loud city life. Did you ever pause to think of the number of wedding-chimes which have been turned by strong drink into funeral knells? Tim was never surely so brilliant, so gay, as at his sister's marriage feast, and the work of entertainment greatly devolved upon him. The bride and bridegroom in genuine love-matches are never of much real use at their *déjeuner;* they are always there by compliment and for ornament, and longing to feel themselves alone, freed from the constraint which the company of others imposes upon their overflowing hearts. Mr. Knight, at Geraldine's wedding, could not, try as he would, find courage to feel light-hearted; the lives of Timothy and Ellen Maloney had been too shadowed, perhaps, for much of the glad infection of a joyous nature to emanate from

either of them; but Tim's mirth, so pure, so sweet, so hearty, was catching. He dispelled all the sorrow that was lurking in any of the hearts present by the sunny fun he made, and never ended his efforts till, with Minnie to join him, he saw really heart-smiles creeping over every face, even on that of his poor mother and of Mr. Knight. When he had once melted the ice, it was easy to keep the stream of pleasant discourse and bright witty hilarity flowing. Timothy Maloney, when thus excited by his son, proved his own metal, and flashed back upon Tim witticisms and droll Irishisms, that evoked the merriest laughter.

At three o'clock the bride and Minnie retired for a-while, and then Geraldine appeared again amongst them, ready for her journey, and looking scarcely less lovely in her plainer costume than she had done in the white robes of the morning; at all events, she did not charm Fred less. Then carriage-wheels were again heard, and there were hurried leave-takings, so many "good-byes" had to be spoken, and poor Geraldine fairly sobbed as she laid her bright head once more on the shoulder of her guardian; perhaps she never knew before how very dearly she loved him, nor how much reason she had to feel grateful to him. Fred stepped into the carriage after her, Tim closed its door, and bent to kiss Geraldine as she sat; she would never forget that kiss. A shower of dilapidated shoes were thrown after them for luck by the servants from the steps above, and the impatient horses quickly drew them away out of the old quiet square, where so many years of Geraldine's life had been spent, away to the busy streets and the new scenes that awaited

her; for, after a month's tour amongst the lakes and in Scotland, they were to sail in the *Geraldine*, as Fred had told the children at Candlemas Alley, for the Azores and the Levant. When they were gone, and Tim had conducted his mother to Waterton Circus, and his little sister to the Blind Asylum, it was time for him and the young ladies to go to Candlemas Alley, where a tea in honour of Geraldine's marriage had been prepared for the children of the Band of Hope, and where all the bridesmaids had promised—greatly to the delight of the children—to appear in their wedding dresses. Every child was presented, by Geraldine's request, with a favour of white satin ribbon, to wear at the tea. The room itself was gaily decorated with white flowers and streamers, and in the centre of each table was a large frosted cake, wreathed with white flowers, and surmounted by a knot of white ribbon, while many of the lovely bouquets that had adorned the breakfast-table at Woburn Square now found a place upon the children's tea-tables. Soon after five the children trooped in. Mr. Waterhouse, who had been an honoured guest in the morning, now made his appearance; and it was one of the gayest, merriest tea-parties that had ever been seated in Candlemas Hall. The young bridesmaids did not serve out the tea, but each cut up one of the cakes for the excited young guests, who, most of them, for the very first time in all their lives, tasted on this night *real* bride-cake, and wished "beautiful Miss Geraldine" joy as they ate. After tea they had music from the young ladies, and singing by themselves, and only one speech, from "our Tim," which was, as they said, the most fun of all. Tim's kind.

pleasant face, radiant with good-nature, and with that Christian cheerfulness which is the most enduring of all happiness, was never wittier in his drollery, never more genial than on that night; and he did not finish without giving them some serious, loving words, which would sink deeply into their young hearts through many a coming day.

"Och! shure, me darlints all," he said, after making them laugh till they were tired and glad to listen, "I've tould ye of very many things the night, but I've not tould ye of quite the best at all at all: I want ye to be teetotal boys and teetotal girls, all of ye, mind that, and for this reason, because teetotalism makes one more barrier between ye and sin; ye would have to break it down before ye can reach the sin of drunkenness, and I pray God ye may never commit that sin. Och! darlints, shure, and me heart is warm with love to ye, for don't I remember how I was once a wandering little spalpeen, just like the worst of ye, and worse than the worst; and in this dear old hall, through that good friend of ours" —and he pointed to Mr. Waterhouse, whom the children immediately cheered—"I learned to be teetotal, and I learned to love Jesus. Let these two things go hand in hand like bright little angels, love to Christ and love to teetotalism, which keeps us from some of the sins that grieve Him; but don't think, my darlints, that anything but Jesus is the road to heaven, or that ye are true temperance boys and girls when ye curse and swear and tell lies, even if ye don't *drink;* the temperance that I have preached to ye means to keep from *all* bad things, and to use in moderation all good things,—will ye mind

this? True temperance is one of the things that God sends His Spirit to teach us, it is one of the fruits of the Spirit. God's Spirit is compared to a goodly tree, and on the branches grow lovely fruits,—temperance is one, love is another, meekness is another, gentleness is another, long-suffering is another—*some* of ye know what *long-suffering* means, God help ye—oh! mind ye pick all these sweet fruits, my darlints." Tim's voice grew very soft and winning; "I'd like to come often amongst ye, and, as it were, reach down the branches to make ye admire and want to gather the fruits; but God knows best—it will all be well however it is. Now, good night to ye, go home peaceably, lovingly; and if there is a drunken father or mother at home (I understand about all these things), keep from saying an angry word to them, pity them, love them, however bad they are, for God has *so* loved us; hang up the white ribbon and the flowers, and let them be emblems of love in the house. Good night, my darlints."

There was a solemn pause and then a ringing shout as Tim sat down, and then one weak little voice said, "Let's cheer the pretty bride, and let's cheer our Tim;" so they gave noisy hip! hip! hurrahs! for Geraldine and for her much-loved brother.

Lingeringly and by degrees the children trooped out from the bright, pretty hall, with a bun and an orange in their hands for supper, and the white flowers which Tim and Minnie, and Mary and Lucy Coleridge distributed to each of them.

CHAPTER XL.

FIRE!—RESCUE!—DEATH!

IT was considerably past eleven o'clock when, adieux having been exchanged, two carriages drove away from Candlemas Alley: in one were Mr. and Miss Knight and Fred's two sisters, in the other Mr. Christie, Minnie and Tim—Mr. Maloney had returned to the College earlier in the evening. For some distance the road of the two vehicles was the same, and then they diverged, Mr. Knight's carriage turning back towards Woburn Square, and that of the Christie's going along through some streets and then past Waterton Circus in the direction of Putney. Mr. Christie sat half asleep, while Minnie and Tim talked over the events of the day; suddenly they were interrupted, there was a loud cry, "Fire! fire!" and again it was repeated far away, "Fire! fire!" and hundreds of people ran hurriedly along the already crowded street. "Fire! fire! clear the road!" and their driver quickly drew up on one side as the steam fire-engine dashed past, crowded with the eager firemen, alert and ready for duty.

"Where is the fire?" asked Tim of a policeman who had ordered that the carriage should turn back and take another route.

"Waterton Circus, sir, number 18—a Dr. Hunt lives there; they say a drunken woman or a mad woman, one of his patients, has set the place on fire."

Tim turned an ashen face towards Minnie; "Darling, I must go;—mother," he whispered.

Minnie took his hand, she leaned her face over it for a moment in perfect stillness, in anxious wrestling prayer to God for help and strength, and when she raised it, though her sweet young face was as pale as his own, and her whole frame quivered with the terrible excitement, she whispered, "God be with you, Tim," and did not seek to hold him back; he folded her in his arms, kissed her once, then again, with yearning tenderness, and was gone.

"Papa," said Minnie, after a minute had elapsed, "will you please to stay here with me? I *must* know how it ends; send the carriage away and let us get down nearer to—*him;*" she was almost gasping for breath.

"My dear child, we had better go home, you can do no good."

"I cannot, please, papa,—indeed I cannot."

So Mr. Christie paid the coachman and sent him away, and father and daughter walked through the mass of surging human forms that had congregated up and down in front of that burning house. Mr. Christie managed, with much difficulty, to find a lamp-post against which to rest poor Minnie; he drew her hand within his arm and held it tightly, and was soon almost

as terribly interested as herself. How madly the flames leaped over the devoted building; how they crept insinuatingly around the stones and licked up with their red, thirsty tongues every stream of water that was being poured upon them from below. The fire-escape had already rescued all the inmates save one, but at the highest story a woman's form was seen darting in a strange manner backwards and forwards before the window; the escape had been raised once to that great height, and she had rushed back amongst the fire and smoke of the burning house, declaring her determination to meet death, and playing so madly with precious time that the baffled fireman had hurried to the succour of the inmates below, whose screams for "help" were already in his ears. When Tim had reached the fire, one glance had revealed to him the identity of that wretched woman,—it was indeed Ellen Maloney.

"I must save her," he cried aloud, "she is my mother;" and plunging boldly into the burning house, he bounded lightly but carefully up the hot staircase, that cracked beneath his tread. New flames burst out on every hand, and here and there floods of water streamed in upon him from the hose, but up he went again: the heavy monotonous sound of the engines working smote upon his ear, he lived almost a life-time of thought as he ascended that long spiral staircase; Nelly, Minnie, Geraldine, and his poor ruined mother. "Oh! God above, if I may only reach her in time!"

Up again with accelerated effort, though he heard some of the stairs below him crackle in the blaze, and the walls when he touched them almost burned his fingers;

on, though his breath came with difficulty, and a stifling sense of suffocation oppressed him; he entered a room to approach the window and get a little air; he looked down upon the sea of upturned faces underneath, plainly visible in the lurid glare of the fire; the crowd recognized and cheered his face as it approached. One glance more revealed to him the forms of Minnie and her father—there was a sweet, sad satisfaction in that faithful, watching, clinging love; he kissed his hand to her, pointed upwards, saw her hand raised to answer him, and was warned again by the creaking groaning of the fire-caught wood around him to hasten to his work. Up once more, and now he had reached the object of his search. Ellen Maloney still wandered restlessly backwards and forwards before the window of that highest room: one glance at her wild eyes revealed to Tim the presence of her frightful malady; without a moment's delay he caught her in his arms, and shouted to those below to quickly raise the ladder of deliverance.

"Mother! I am come to save ye."

"But I shall not be saved, Tim," she cried, and struggled in his grasp; "ye've held me from death many and many a time, but ye will not hould me now."

"Mother! mother! ye are not fit to die," moaned Tim; "mother, I must, I will save ye, or die with ye."

"Ye will not save me, Tim; I can't live widout the dhrink,—I've tried and I've tried, and now I have taken it once more to die: shure, and I tricked ye well," she said, while a hideous burst of fiendish merriment escaped her lips. "Out to Geraldine's fine wedding, and I got a nice little bottle filled by the way—shure, and I've waited

long for the filling of it. How warm it is here, how bright and beautiful the fire burns! don't ye like it up here, Tim?"

"Mother, hold your peace, for God's sake; they are bringing us the ladder."

"But they will not save me, Tim, ye will not, no one will;" and she drew him back with all the mad strength of her drunken fury as she spoke.

"Mother, mother, will ye kill us both, and I trying hard to save ye?"

She struggled furiously in his strong young arms—struggled while the yellow flames darted through the crevices of the floor on which they stood—struggled and dashed about, trying to separate herself from that saving embrace of her devoted son. Tim dragged her once again towards the window. For one horrible moment her writhing form and his woful face were seen in the firelight; and then, before the fireman on the escape outside could enter to his assistance, there was a horrible crash within, as the floor gave way, and into the burning, yawning, flaming abyss below, the mother and son fell headlong together—the young manly form in its full pride and strength and beauty, and the blighted, withered remains of that wasted life. With another yet louder crash, the roof of the house gave way. The fireman on the escape hurried down, only just avoiding destruction; and as it fell, a groan of agony, of disappointed hope burst from the crowd below; but the soul of Tim Maloney mounted on a chariot of fire to heaven, there to find his little "darlint Nelly" waiting for him at the portals, and to hear the "Well done, good and faith-

ful servant," of his Lord. Oh, the magnificence, the beauty, the peace and rest of that fair home above! Just as a time of unclouded happiness even here below can make us forget months of weary sorrow and heart-ache, so surely will "the glories which shall be revealed" eclipse for ever the earthly troubles and griefs of "our Tim"—yea, even the bitterness of that most terrible death.

Minnie Christie, as she heard that groan, and watched the wild progress of the fire, now unconfined in its course, and rejoicing, like a madman, in the havoc it had made, felt her heart sink within her. "Father," she whispered, close to his ear—"father, what is it? is there no hope left?"

"Minnie, my dear child, we must go away from here; this is no place for you now;" and he led her unresistingly from the throng, supporting her tottering steps, till they had reached a carriage-stand a street off.

"Stop, papa; will he be found?" she said, as her father was about to follow her into the cab. "I would give all I have to insure his being found."

"Quite right, my child; I will offer a reward."

"Do say a large one, papa; all the money I should have had."

"Hush, hush! my dear; I will do it properly. Stay here a minute, and I will be with you again."

He ran back to the scene of the fire; the men were still working vigorously at their engines, great drops of perspiration running over their faces. Mr. Christie, with some difficulty, got to speak to the superintendent of the brigade. In a few words he told him the circumstances, and added, as he left, "I offer a reward of fifty pounds

to any of your men who will bring the remains of that young temperance martyr and his poor deluded mother to Knight's College at Putney."

"I will be sure to attend to your request, sir."

Mr. Christie joined his daughter, and they drove away. Mrs. Christie, dreadfully frightened at their protracted absence, met them at the door of their home; but at sight of her mother, the unnatural quietude of Minnie gave way, and with an hysterical sob she fell senseless at her parents' feet. The cloak in which, but a few hours before, Tim's loving hands had wrapped her, slipped from her shoulders as she fell, and revealed the crushed and tumbled wedding-garments of the morning —the fair roses spoiled, the bright silk dimmed—fit emblems of the sorrow and death that had so suddenly swept away the brightest, sweetest hopes of Minnie Christie's gentle heart.

For many hours a merciful unconsciousness numbed her faculties. When the poor charred and blackened remains of Tim Maloney and his mother were brought next day to his college home, dug out from among the *débris* of the ruined house, with no trace left of the pleasant face, the kind hands, the willing feet, she knew it not; and when she rallied a little from her fainting fits, her mind seemed hardly awake to the dreadful realities it had encountered.

She roused at last, just as her loving friends began to fear that reason itself had given way—roused at the sight of Geraldine. Poor Geraldine hurried back, a bride of a few hours, together with her loving husband, from their pleasant wanderings, to exchange rejoicing for weeping,

and gayest mirth for keenest sorrow. But when Minnie woke from her stupor, the unnatural calmness again rested upon her features, and she was ready to do all that could possibly be done. "I will go to his funeral, Geraldine," she said, in a tone so hollow, that it made her friend's tears flow afresh. "I know he would have liked it; I feel very strong, dear, to do all he would have wished."

Minnie knew Tim's tastes so well, that she, more than any one else, arranged the order of his burial. She knew, she said, that he desired, if he died near London, to be buried beside his little "darlint" Nelly, in Kensal Green Cemetery. He never liked pomp or show of any kind, and would only have desired that those who really mourned him should follow him to the grave. So his sorrowing friends at Putney assembled, and the first funeral that wound its solemn course from Knight's Temperance College was that of "our Tim," to whom its founder had looked for aid through many hopeful, happy years. But Tim's noble work was early accomplished; he had proved himself to be possessed of that spirit of glorious and Christ-like heroism which manifests itself in utter self-forgetfulness for another's sake. A quiet, unpretentious funeral it looked, until it had reached the long straight road leading to the cemetery, and there it was joined by numerous carriages and hundreds of people on foot; there were deputations from every Temperance Society and every Band of Hope in London; there were all the members of the Candlemas Alley Band of Hope; there were little groups of poor widows and orphans to whom, unknown

to his friends, Tim had been for years a loving benefactor. Poor Biddy Simmons amongst her children was sobbing bitterly; and there were clusters of city Arabs standing shyly at some distance from that open grave, awed for once into solemnity of thought by the death of him who had so often befriended them, and drawn their young hearts so close to his own warm loving one by the gaiety and frankness of his manner to them, and then had often taken occasion to speak to them of those great truths which should lead them to desire to live sober and pure lives, for Christ's sake.

None had any idea till they all met beside his grave how wide the influence of Tim had been. Minnie knew many of Tim's secret charities, but not even Minnie had known nor guessed all she learned that day. Is it not a solemn thought for all of us, how much good may be produced even in a very short life, if only it is all spent in most earnest endeavours to do good, and if every opportunity that presents itself is seized and employed. That perfect Life, which is our glorious model and example of all things fair and excellent, how short it was measured by earthly reckoning; how boundless, how eternal in its grand and noble issues to mankind!

The birds were singing, the sun was shining, and the daisies peeped from amongst the green grass when they laid Tim Maloney and his poor mother in one grave, beside that of little Nelly. Minnie Christie, leaning on the arm of Tim's father, walked next the coffin, which was borne by his fellow-students. A long line of friends followed, and outside the circle who took their places immediately around the grave, were men and women

and children, many of them meanly clad, some even in rags, but all full of love to the departed.

As Mr. Waterhouse conducted the solemn burial service, with voice broken by tenderest emotion, echoing sobs and sighs, and the noise of weeping, might have been heard from all that dense crowd—all save Minnie; she stood beside Tim's father, striving, by her gentle looks, to comfort him, for he was terribly overcome; her own face perfectly calm, but white as alabaster.

Then a hymn was sung, a favourite of Tim's as it had been of little Nelly's,—

> "There is a land of pure delight;"

and at the words,—

> "There everlasting spring abides
> And never-withering flowers,"

Minnie gently threw upon the coffin the little wreath of red and white camellias she had carried in her hand; others of the company laid sweet flower offerings upon hers; and many of the poor lads advanced timidly and threw down a handful of daisies, the only flowers they could bring.

> "Bring flowers, pale flowers, o'er the bier to shed
> A crown for the brow of the early dead."

When it was over and the earth rattled on the coffin-lid, and she had gazed down upon that solemn sight for the last time, she turned to the weeping women who then drew near, and heard, with a sad, sweet smile upon her lips, what her Tim had done for them in soul and body.

The funeral party returned to the College. Her father led Minnie home. She begged to be left alone, and

then ascended the stairs to her pretty chamber; there she sat down in her favourite seat by the window that overlooked the garden, and the river, and the distant College, with its graceful colonnade of pure white stone. And Tim seemed no longer far away, but still with her, as she remembered how almost every plant, and tree, and walk that lay before her eyes, they had known and thought of together. Heaven, too, was so near to her at that hour, she realized his great joy so fully, the echoes from the golden harps still sounded in her ears so plainly, not shut out by any earthly discords, that her heart was as calm and peaceful as her sweet pale face.

She heard again, after some hours thus spent, her mother's foot upon the stairs as she had heard it that night when Tim and she were first engaged; and now, as at that time, she rose to welcome her. But when Mrs. Christie, sobbing herself, caressed Minnie tenderly, Minnie answered her with beaming eyes: "I cannot cry, mamma"—and a holy smile played around her sweet mouth as she spoke—"I can only feel to-night that all my darling Tim's troubles are ended."

And the mother was too experienced to wonder much at this deceitful calm. She knew that an avalanche of sorrow must ere long descend upon this young, this early widowed heart.